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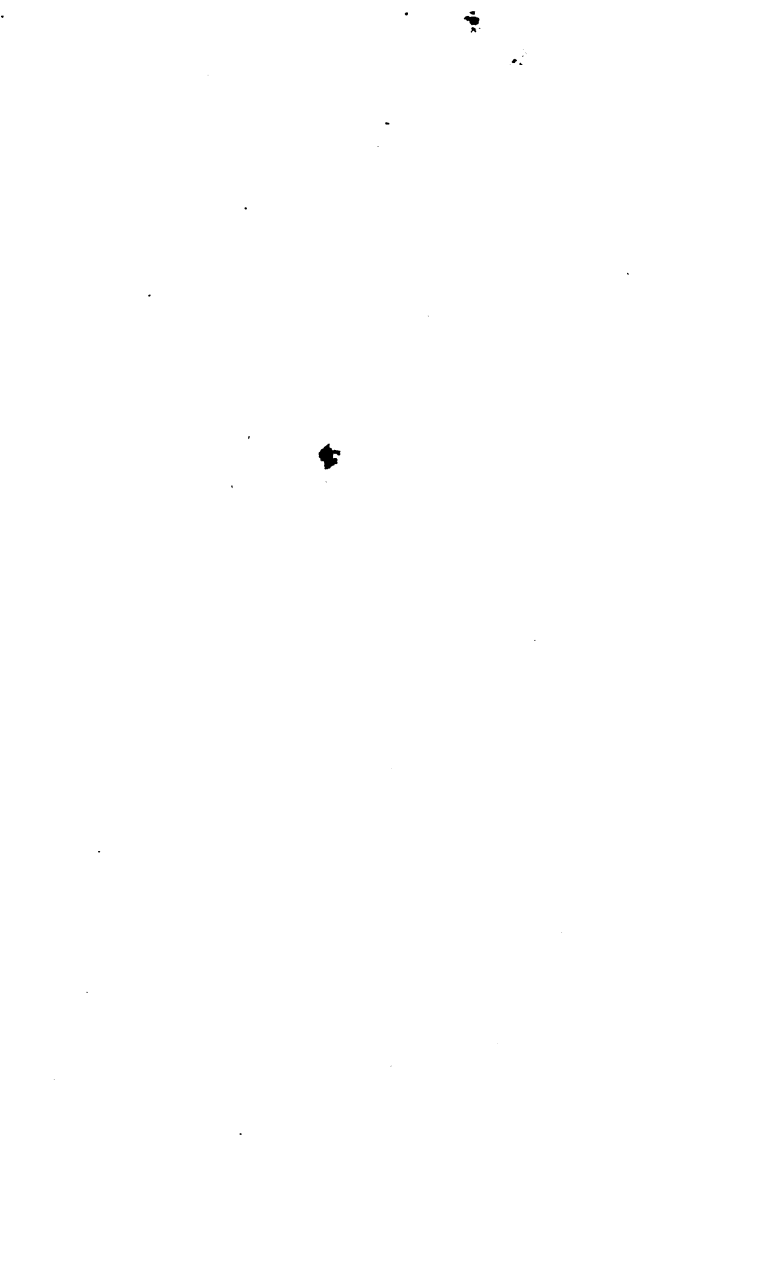
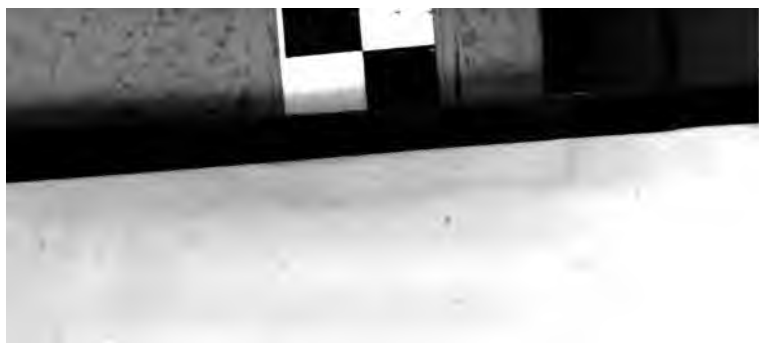
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DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

FOEDERAL TRANSACTIONS

BETWEEN

GOD AND HIS CHURCH,

BOTH BEFORE AND SINCE
THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE
WAS COMPLETED.

BY JOHN MUIRHEAD,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, KELSO.

—“Κρατῶμεν τῆς ὉΜΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ.” Heb. iv. 14.



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P R E F A C E.

WHEN the following DISSERTATIONS were composed, the author had not resolved whether he should submit them to the review of the public or not. Several divines had already written on the subject of Covenanting, with distinguished success. Scarce any thing could be said, in the form of Sermons, but what they had *observed*. He did not choose to repeat to a Congregation what every one might read in the closet. These things determined him to confine his attention to what may be called the HISTORY OF FOEDERAL TRANSACTIONS, that he might illustrate the argument deduced, from the example of the Saints in every age. It immediately occurred to him, that this province had been less occupied than others; and that two advantages might accrue from this plan: It would appear, in the first place, That, though Covenanters have few,

or none, who are deemed great and wise in this age, to bear them company ; yet they are kept in countenance by the practice of the best and greatest of men,—and the most distinguished saints that ever existed in this world. Covenant-renovation having been the usual mean of Reformation in the Church, and of reviving to the souls of the Godly, since the world began. In the next place, The argument taken from the approved example of the Saints appeared, by much, the easiest to be handled by the author, and understood by the reader. Examples are more readily comprehended than precepts and doctrines, or prophecies. The greater part of mankind are better able to judge of what is done, than what ought to be done. And, Providence having laid the materials to hand, honesty and diligence, more than capacity, were requisite for their arrangement. These were some of the reasons which induced him to adventure
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on a publication. It is sincerely regretted, that some material parts of information could not be procured by the author, in his present circumstances; but, where information was a-wanting, he chose to be silent, rather than hazard conjectures. Some may censure him, perhaps, for producing too many vouchers, and others may still demand more; but, as the former objection appears to be without foundation; so he shall endeavour to satisfy the latter, when the defect of evidence, as to particular facts, shall be pointed out. The formality of method, used in delivering the discourses at first, is still retained. It may appear insipid, perhaps, to the refined taste of some readers; but it was deemed proper to prefer order and perspicuity to elegance; as divisions of discourses render them more memorable and plain to some sorts of readers.

It will also be remembered, by those who heard the first part of these Dissertations,

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tations, that some of the Reflections are omitted, and others of them transplanted to a different place from that which they originally held. The same Reflection, having occurred oftener than once, is retained only in the place in which it appeared to be most proper.

THAT the Father of Mercies may accompany these Dissertations, so far as agreeable to his will, with his blessing, is the earnest wish of

J. MUIRHEAD.

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DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

FOEDERAL TRANSACTIONS, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is the peculiar excellence of Gospel-revelation, to discover the origin of evil ; as also, that deliverance from it which God has provided for his people. Ever since sin entered into this world, nature's light, in its most cultivated state, has not only been altogether unsatisfactory, but even totally silent on each of these most interesting subjects : The Holy Scriptures, however, are full and perspicuous on both ; they discover not only the cause of our destruction, but likewise the source of our help. It is not the design of the following

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ing Dissertations to consider that transaction which obtained between God and Adam, in his innocent state, the violation of which is the teeming source of all evil; nor the eternal contract between the Father and the Son, which is the fountain of life unto the guilty soul: Yet, as the dispensations of Grace are among the immediate causes of the Church's engagements to be the Lord's, we must premise a few things concerning that Covenant to which they belong. By way of preliminary, then, we shall first take a short survey of that Covenant which obtained, from eternity, between God the Father and his Eternal Son.—Then we shall consider the connection between the Covenant of Grace and the Church's Covenant of Duty.—Afterwards, we shall attend unto the State of the Church, from the Fall of Adam until the Fœderal Transaction between God and Noah.

FIRST, I am to take a short survey of the Eternal Compact between God the Father and his only begotten Son. To remove ambiguity, and prevent repetition, I shall run over the various significations of the terms by which it is expressed in both the

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the Old and New Testament. The term Covenant *, in the language of the Old Testament, is derived from a word which signifies to choose †: and is expressive of the nature of a Fœderal Transaction, for a Covenant is that which both parties choose, and in which they agree. All God's promises, for example, are free and sovereign acts of his will, manifested unto men; and all genuine obedience on the part of his children is a free-will offering unto the Lord.

THE term Covenant is used both in a sacred and civil sense. It is used in a civil sense to express such leagues as obtained between Princes in ancient times ‡; but on this sense we need not insist.—When it is used in a sacred sense it expresseth,

1. THE Covenant which took place between God and Adam in Paradise,—which was broken by Adam; “But they like men have transgressed the Covenant:” So

* ברית. † ברר, elegit. This derivation is vindicated, Appendix No. I. ‡ For example, Gen. xiv. 13.—xxi. 27, 33.—xxvi. 28.—xxxi. 44. &c.

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he wrote upon the tables the words of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments *.” It likewise expresseth the effect of a Covenant, which is peace: Said Eliphaz, “for thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee †.” Said God himself, “I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of Heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground ‡.” That is, no more harm is to be dreaded from them, than from the person with whom thou art in the strictest confederacy: Whereas, they are all in arms, in the cause of their Sovereign, against sinners §.

THE

* Exod. xxxiv. 28. † Job v. 23. ‡ Hos. ii. 18.

§ Learned men have added yet another sense of the word, which deserves some consideration. They reckon it is parallel with חק, which signifies a STATUTE, or an ordinance. That the terms used, are sometimes synonymous, cannot be denied: But that ever ברית signifies A NAKED STATUTE, can never be proved. To me it rather appears, that חק sometimes denotes COVENANT, as well as ברית: Jeremiah takes them both in the same sense. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21. compared with Jer. xxxi. 36. In these texts, the Lord compares the Covenant he made with David with that which he made with Noah; shewing that the former is as certain as the latter, which he confirms by daily experience. Nor is he the only inspired

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THE term which we render COVENANT in the Old Testament, is translated, by the inspired writers of the New Testament, by a word which is sometimes rendered COVENANT, and sometimes TESTAMENT*. The great Prophet of the Church useth it to express that transaction which obtained between the Father and himself, as well as his conveyance of his kingdom unto his people. Said he, "I APPOINT unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath APPOINTED unto me †." The word appoint is rather too narrow to express all that is intended in the inspired original. The original word imports, not only all the certainty of an APPOINTMENT, but also, all the precision of a FOEDERAL SETTLEMENT. It imports both a FOEDERAL SETTLEMENT and a TESTAMENTARY DISPOSITION; both senses are contained in the text just now quoted: The Fœderal Appointment, and that only, obtained between the Father and the Son; for the Father could

red writer who considers them as synonymous: Said the inspired historian of the book of Joshua, "so Joshua made a COVENANT with the people that day; and set them a STATUTE and an ordinance in Shechem." Josh. xxiv. 25.

* Διαθήκη, and Διατίθημι.

† Luke xxii. 29.

not

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not die to leave the kingdom as a legacy, by testament, unto the Son: Both the Federal Settlement and the Testamentary Disposition, obtained in Christ's administration toward the Church; for, as he died to turn his Covenant into a Testament, so he engageth himself, by covenant-promise, unto his children; and bindeth them unto himself with the bands of a man. More particularly,

1. THIS term, in the New Testament, denotes a Covenant, in the proper notion of the word: That is, a voluntary compact between two distinct parties. "By so much was Jesus the surety of a better covenant *." I would choose to translate the
Apostle's

* Heb. vii. 22. Some authors, I grant, contend that *διαθήκη* can never properly be rendered COVENANT, but ought always to be translated TESTAMENT. But such a Supposition must bear hard on the inspired Writers of the New Testament. The Cocceians, however, are rash enough to give into it. And Le Clerc considers Paul, as one "who delighted in the play of a Hellenistical writer, when he used *διαθήκη* to denote COVENANT." But his insolence and profanity have been chastised by the learned Dr Whitby: See his Paraphrase and Comment on Heb. ix. 20. The Hutchinsonians likewise aver, that either Paul's dialect was Hellenistical, if not cabalistical, or that he did not intend to express, by *διαθήκη*, what we call

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Apostle's testimony in this manner ; for there is little or no place for a surety in a Testament ; whereas it is proper, and sometimes even necessary in a Covenant.

2. THE Apostle useth this term, to express TESTAMENT: Said he, " For where

call a COVENANT. The writers of the New Testament, however, may be justified for their using this term, in the sense specified, from the example of the purest classical writers in the Greek language, in the best times of their Republic. Though Διαθήκη be more extensive in its signification than Συμβήκη ; yet the Grecians, whether orators or historians, bards or statesmen, have taken it as nearly synonymous ; or in the same sense with the Apostle, at least. Budæus, Comment. Ling. Græc. p. 629. quotes various good classics, using this term in the same sense as Συμβήκη. Nor are the best critics in that language otherways minded : Witness Stephanus, Hesychius, Phavorinus, &c. Georgius de Idioticismis Novi Testamenti immerito affectis. Jablonski de propria significatione τῆς Διαθήκης. This term is better rendered COVENANT, than TESTAMENT, in Heb. viii. 6, 9. Luke i. 72. Acts iii. 25. Rom. xi. 27 ; and, perhaps, in all places where it occurs, except in Gal. iii. 15. and Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17. Conradus Kircher finds the Septuagint to translate ברית by Διαθήκη, in all places wherever it occurs, except Deut. ix. 15. and 1 Kings xi. 11. : And the term is to be found above two hundred times in the Old Testament. The translation of the Septuagint could not be of great authority, however, were it not confirmed, in this instance at least, by the inspired writers of the New Testament. Nor is there any one word in our language, so proper for expressing the idea conveyed in both terms, as the word COVENANT.

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2

a Testament is, there must also, of necessity, be the death of the Testator; for a Testament is of force after men are dead: otherways, it is of no strength at all while the Testator liveth*." The Apostle argueth, from the nature of a testament, unto the necessity of the confirmation of the Covenant of Grace, which is a testamentary covenant, by the death of Christ. The Hebrews were ready to stumble at the sufferings of the Messiah; but the Apostle taught them, that such a covenant rendered them absolutely necessary†. But the strength of

* Heb. ix. 16, 17.

† "Una ergo illa circumstantia principali, videlicet Sponsoris seu Fidejussoris pro nobis substitutione, principaliter continetur Differentia Veteris et Novi Fœderis, a qua Novum Fœdus etiam denominatur FOEDUS GRATIÆ. A gratia autem illa Sponsoris, CONSUMMANDA OLIM, et NUNC CONSUMMATA in morte ipsius, Fœdus illud nostri respectu induit naturam TESTAMENTI. Nomen illud Testamenti neutiquam convenit legali originali Fœderi operam. Sed characteristicum est Novo Fœderi Gratia: neque sit citra magnam ἀκυρολογίαν quod FOEDERIS et TESTAMENTI voces promiscue usurpant Latini Bibliorum interpretes: cum vix alius locus TESTAMENTI voce flagitare videatur, quam unicus scilicet Heb. ix. 17. idque non vi vocis Διαθήκη, sed quia antecedit hæreditatis adipiscendæ mentio. Alia est ergo, proprie et accurate loquendo differentia jam explicata VETERIS et NOVI FOEDERIS; Alia VETERIS et NOVI TESTAMENTI."—CLOP. Exercit. Theol. Loc. 8. Disp. 1. § 2. Theol. 17. 18. 19.

his

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his argument does not lie so much in the formal signification of the term, as in the nature of the subject of which the Apostle speaks. The eternal inheritance, mentioned in a foregoing verse, is not sold to the possessors of it for their good works; but conveyed by a testamentary-deed, ratified by the death of a testator.

3. THIS term seems to be used in a mixed sense, comprehending at once the idea of a TESTAMENT, and of a COVENANT. Some have stiled the Covenant of Grace a FOEDERAL TESTAMENT, and a TESTAMENTARY COVENANT. In this sense, the word must be taken by Paul, when he says, "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, (or testament) yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. *" This covenant assumed the form of a testament in every administration of it, whether as typically ratified by sacrifice, or actually confirmed by the death of Christ.

As to the nature of this transaction, I may observe,

* Gal. iii. 15.

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1. THAT it originated in the free and sovereign love of the Eternal Father towards lost sinners. The Scriptures, every where, introduce him as the grand contriver of this covenant,—as the first speaker in the Council of Peace : They resolve this grand proposal into a free act of his will. The Son, who came to unveil this stupendous transaction unto men, uniformly resolves it into the same source. “ Then said I, Lo I come : In the volume of the book it is written of me ! I delight to do thy WILL, O my God : yea, thy law is within my heart * ! ” As it was the good pleasure of God which determined, whether any thing should ever exist besides himself ; so it was the same good pleasure which fixed the lot of every man after he had sinned : That is, whether he should share in the same fate with fallen angels, or if such a salvation should be accomplished in his favour, as might consist with all the claims of divine justice and holiness. In free and uninfluenced sovereignty, he took this method of manifesting his glory, and displaying his mercy, that perfection which had not been unveiled by the first creation. In

* Psal. xl. 7, 8.

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divine wisdom, he found out the Son, as the only possible substitute for sinners ; and gave a company of them unto him, to be redeemed and saved by him. Sovereignty is also the origin of all the mercies promised to, and through the Son, as the head of the mystical body : Says God, " I WILL have mercy on whom I WILL have mercy." It were easy to show that each particular mercy flows from this eternal source. As all the promises flow from this fountain, so it was the same sovereign pleasure which transferred the condition of these promises from the sinner to the surety. Hence, when he was accomplishing it, he expressly declared, that he was doing the WILL of him who sent him.

THERE are some who carry the glory of divine sovereignty yet higher, as they imagine, supposing, that sovereignty is the sole cause of the Satisfaction itself, even upon the supposition of sin, and also of the salvation of the sinner. They fear not to aver, the end might have been gained without any satisfaction at all, if it had consisted with God's good pleasure. But why should any suppose, that God would shed

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shed the blood of his own dear Son without necessity? Or, that the punishment of sin is merely arbitrary to that God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil: and who CANNOT look on iniquity*?

2. THE formal constitution of this Covenant consists in the Son's acceptance of the Father's proposal; and in his undertaking to fulfil that condition which he required at his hand: That is, the Son engaged to be made of a woman, and made under the law, both in its precept and penalty, to redeem them who were under the law in these very respects; upon the Father's promising to bestow on him a special seed, with all the blessings requisite for both himself and them. That explicit and present acceptance of proposals constitutes a covenant, cannot be denied: That the Father made such proposals to the Son is evident from many places of Scripture†: That the Son accepted of these proposals is equally certain, from his own declaration, already quoted. The truth is, the Father

* Hab. i. 13. † Psal. ii. 8. Is. liii. 6—12. xlix. 5—12. Psal. lxxxix. 1—37. Psal. cx. per totum. Psal. cxxxii. per tot. Vide Wiff. Oecon. lib. 2. cap. 2.

was not more willing to propose, than the Son to accept the terms of the New Covenant. His acceptance is manifest from his office-title, the SURETY OF A BETTER COVENANT*. A surety is of use only where one of the parties has already failed ; or, at least, is capable of doing so : There is no place for one, where the principal, in point of obligation, is infallible and immutable : therefore, there was no room for a surety for God ; a God capable of coming short of his promise is no God. The suretyship of Jesus Christ, then, consisted in his taking upon himself the burden of his people's debt, both of obedience and suffering, with a full resolution to pay it. He took it in consequence of the Father's laying it on him ; " for the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." His bond of suretyship was of equal extent with his people's debt-bond, in the Covenant of Works. One of the main devices of satan, in these last days, is, to assign another rule unto the obedience and sufferings of our Redeemer, than the moral law, as a covenant of works. But this newly invented standard of his

* Heb. vii. 22.

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righteousness is wholly unknown in the Sacred Record: the uniform voice of Scripture is, he was made under the LAW, as armed with the CURSE, to the intent that he might redeem them who were under the Law, clothed with that identical circumstance. Now, I would gladly know what other law, beside the Covenant of Works, is armed with the CURSE? The curse, certainly, is not due but to the transgressor. I would also learn, what other law the redeemed are under, in their natural state, but this same Law-covenant? Now, that Law, which is the measure of the Redeemer's suretyship, is no other than that which his people are under, in their lapsed state. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a CURSE for us.—God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them who were under the Law*."

Of the same kidney is their doctrine, who transplant the Redeemer's suretyship from his priestly to his prophetic office.

* Gal. iii. 13. iv. 4, 5.

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It stands, however, in his priestly office, by the suffrage of an inspired Apostle. It must be so ; for the Apostle discourseth of no other office in the whole seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, than the sacerdotal : His scope, in the whole chapter, is, to prove the superior excellence of Christ in this very respect.

SOME still insinuate, that there is no place for the formality of a covenant between the parties specified. But this objection comes rather too late, as we are assured, that this formality has already taken place. It is of no importance to insist, That, as the essence of the Father and the Son, so their will is one : For it may be answered, As the same essence subsists in three persons, who are really distinct from each other, so the same will may be, and really is applied to distinct actings, in each of these distinct persons, in a manner superior to our understandings.

3. THE promises, made by the Father to the Son (besides other confirmations), were solemnly ratified by the death of Christ : The promises were all conditional

* C to

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to him, as they are all absolutely free to us: And they are all sure to the seed, as the condition of them was perfectly implemented by his obedience and death. By death he removed every legal bar which stood in the way of there accomplishment. Now justice is as much an advocate for the accomplishment of the promises, and the communication of blessings, as mercy: Yea, God could not be just to himself, if he did not fulfil all New Covenant promises; seeing justice is satisfied with the condition of it. The accomplishment of that condition, which Truth and Justice required, turned the Covenant into a Testament; and rendered it so sure, as nothing either in heaven, earth, or hell, can disannul it, or add any condition, unto the promises of it, whatsoever. As soon as ever the promises of this covenant were announced to sinners, they were exhibited in the form of a Testament, to be confirmed by the BRUISED HEEL OF THE SEED OF THE WOMAN. As there were sacrifices from the fall, and downwards, to the incarnation, so the use of expiatory ones was to ratify the promises typically, before they were ratified actually by the death of Christ:
For

For where a testament is, there must, of necessity, be the death of the testator. Now, he was slain, typically, from the foundation of the world. And the death which this Testator died, was the penalty of the covenant of works: He was made under the law, as a covenant of works, as we have seen, to redeem them who were under it in that very respect. To explain this law (with some) either of the Ceremonial or Judicial Law, or of both, were to confine redemption to the Jews; for they are the only people who were ever under those laws: Than which no one thing can be more absurd; for he hath concluded both Jews and Gentiles under sin.

4. As the Mediator had the burden of accomplishing the condition of the New Covenant, so he has the honour of proclaiming all the promises of it, as a prophet; and bestowing all the blessings of it, as a king: "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." The mediatorial life of our Lord Jesus Christ is truly royal and affluent; for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.

He gives gifts unto his subjects, suitable unto his princely state, without any merit, but all to the contrary, on their part. He bestows on them the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, that they may reign with him in eternal life. The blessings he dispenseth have been the same from the beginning: As the necessities of men were the same before the flood and after it; before the incarnation, and since the fulness of time. The means of communication, however, have been greatly diversified. The following Dissertations are designed as a view of the gradual revelations which are made unto the Church; as these were requisite for, and, in the wisdom of God, adapted unto that particular state of it, on which they were bestowed.

5. THE exhibition of New Covenant promises, by Christ; and the acceptance of them, with a resolution to improve them, by his people, constitute a covenant relation between God and them. Evangelical Covenanting supposeth the exhibition of the Covenant which obtained between the Father and the Son, as well as the administration

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ministration of the promises by Christ : and it consists in taking hold of him who is given for a Covenant to the people, with a resolution never to go back from him by unbelief, or disobedience of whatever kind. And the different modes of Covenanting originate in the different measures of revelation, or the different systems of ordinances and worship which Christ hath bestowed on his Church in different periods ; or from the different modes of making their resolutions, and the different confirmations of these resolutions ; or the different situations in which they were placed by adorable Providence.

THIS leads us to a Second Preliminary, but, before proceeding to it, I shall make a reflection or two on what has been suggested.

1. THESE few strictures on the Covenant of Grace discover the vanity of some modern notions concerning it. The modern system is, " That God is so well pleased with the sufferings of Christ, as to remit the rigorous terms of the Covenant of works ; and to enter into a new Covenant
nant

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nant with mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, upon terms suitable to our reason, and equal to our abilities ; for these are faith and sincere repentance. On these conditions, our justification, adoption, and future glory do depend : For they are that righteousness on account of which the pardon of our sins, and our acceptance before God do proceed." So our moderns sagely determine ! But, from what is above observed, it is plain it was quite other-ways determined in the Council of Peace. The friends of this scheme suppose themselves to be very charitable ; but the scheme itself is so far from being charitable, that it lands all the fallen sons of Adam in eternal perdition. It must be so ; for no one can command one act of faith, until it be given him, on the behalf of Christ, to believe : Instead of sincerity, the heart of man—of every man in his natural state, is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ;—**DECEITFUL** beyond all investigation by human scrutiny ; and **WICKED**, yea **DESPERATELY WICKED**, beyond all possibility of cure, by human endeavour. Every one, then, who makes such sincerity as he can attain, by his natural

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tural powers, the basis of his salvation, must inevitably perish. It cannot be otherwise, as no degree of sincerity, however small, can be attained. A scheme so fraught with destruction ought certainly to be reprobated by every person truly charitable. These men ought either to abandon their exclusive claim to charity, or else their uncharitable system : One of these fortresses must be altogether untenable. The Scriptures uniformly ascribe the justification and salvation of sinners, not to their own righteousness, or any work done by them, whether perfect or imperfect, whether sincere or insincere ; but to the righteousness which is of God, by the faith of Jesus Christ. The modern scheme, however popular, is as opposite to the Scripture account of the righteousness of Christ as possible. The Scriptures represent the obedience and death of Christ as magnifying the law of God, and making it honourable, instead of bringing down its high demands of perfect obedience, to accept of that which is sincere ; " The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake ; he will magnify the law and make it honourable." Tell me, O ye sons of Pelagius !

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O ye masters of reason ! How the law is magnified by levelling the demand of perfection into a demand of sincerity ? On one occasion, the new system teacheth us, that Christ came to add new precepts to the law, to perfect and enlarge its meaning ; on another, he came to bring down its rigorous demands, and level it to our abilities. Tell me, O ye sons of Socinus ! How can these things be ? The truth is, that which these men call the Covenant of Grace, does not exist without the lines of the legal heart : And no one thing can be more unlike the Covenant revealed to us in the holy Scriptures.

2. We may infer, That the Covenant of Grace is a proper covenant. Some greatly obscure the doctrine of this transaction, denying that it is strictly fœderal. But every requisite of a Covenant, in the strictest sense of the term, is to be found in it : There are distinct parties ; different parts ; proposals made on the one hand, and accepted on the other. The sketch we have drawn of it is sufficient to obviate all they can alledge, who would represent this Covenant as a NAKED DECREE, as they

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they are pleased to style it ; and also to repel the Cocceian dreams about an eternal testament, as opposed to a proper Covenant.

3. **THOUGH** this transaction be strictly fœderal, as it obtained between the Father and the Son ; yet it is testamentary, both in its confirmation and exhibition : All the essentials of a testament are to be found in it ; such as, a Testator, who ratified it by his death ; an inheritance, to be conveyed ; a seed, to be constituted heirs ; and a deed of conveyance, legally drawn, and duly executed, so that it might be pleadable in behalf of the legatees. All the benefits of this covenant are properly legacies, in respect of the freedom with which they are bestowed on the covenanted seed. All the children of the covenant are properly legatees ; they dare not plead their own, but the Mediator's merit, and his testament as the foundation of their claim of right. And, as in testaments, he who accepts of one of the articles must accept of, and stand to all the rest ; so he who accepts of one promise of the New Covenant must accept of it all : And, if once accepted, it must be

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improved unto all the purposes for which it was designed. Acceptance of it lays persons under inviolable ties of gratitude to improve the promises and privileges of the covenant, in the performance of all those duties which are connected with, and consequent upon an instating in it.

As a SECOND PRELIMINARY, We shall attend unto the connection between the Covenant of Mercy and the Church's Covenant of Duty.

1. AND they are connected together, as the Eternal Covenant is the foundation of access to God in this Duty. No one of Adam's guilty family durst ever have adventured upon such a solemn duty, had not God exhibited the surety-righteousness which is the condition of the New Covenant, as a sure foundation on which sinners may stand before him. Nor could any have drawn near to God, in this duty, unless he had revealed the promises of the covenant, for their welcome and encouragement. Let the covenant, for example, be, **THE LORD IS OUR GOD: Who,** of all the guilty race, durst have avouched
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the Lord, as his God, had not God first promised, "I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God." Sin made such a distance between God and man, and guilt left such a dread of God on the conscience, that Adam fled from the PRESENCE OF THE LORD, instead of cleaving unto him by covenant-engagements. But the accomplishment of the condition of the New Covenant not only removes our fears, it also inspires with confidence; while the promises raise an assured hope of acceptance in approaching God, in the most solemn forms of dedication unto him, as well as strength to pay what has been vowed.

2. THE Eternal Covenant and the Church's Covenant of Duties are allied to each other; as that is the measure, and, indeed, the matter of the Church's engagements to be the Lord's. As we know not what to pray for, but as the promises furnish us with petitions, so we know not what we should promise unto God, but as the same promises furnish us with vows. Acceptable prayers are just divine promises turned into supplications and requests;

acceptable vows are nothing else than the foreſaid promiſes turned into holy reſolutions. The promiſes of God's Covenant and the precepts of his Law are of equal extent ; and as the matter of religious vows are authoriſed by the divine law, ſo they are alſo warranted by the divine promiſes ; and the matter of theſe covenants is no other than the matter of the promiſe improved according to the deſign of its great author. The Church's engagements ſhould extend no farther than the promiſes of the goſpel ; or, if they do, they are certainly ſuperſtitious. The vows of the Romiſh Church are juſtly reprobated on this account : Proteſtants know not how they can be performed ; for as they are confeſſedly more than any thing for which God hath promiſed his grace, they muſt all be performed in their own ſtrength. But there is no place to object, That the religious Covenants of the Church of God, in all ages, and of Proteſtants, in particular, are of the ſuperſtitious kind ; for it can never be ſuperſtitious to vow the performance of that which God will work in us, and unto which he will enable us.—
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of any thing God has promised to his Church, or engaged to bestow upon her children. If our engagements include less than the Covenant of Grace, we must, in that case, despise all that grace that is omitted. As there is nothing in all the New Covenant which God thought too small for him to promise and bestow, so there is nothing in it too small for the covenanted seed to acknowledge, to the praise of his grace;—nothing of which they dare to be ashamed to own, that they are interested in it. Be not bullied out of covenant-engagements, because some affect to represent them as matters of indifference, unimportant punctilios; for, that God who bestowed them, conferred sufficient dignity upon them. Every thing which is of God is truly great.

3. THE Covenant of Grace and our Covenant of Duty are closely allied, as the formal nature of evangelical covenanting consists in taking hold of that Covenant, as exhibited in the gospel. Personal covenanting consists in a personal acceptance of God's gracious Covenant, according to that exhibition of it which the person enjoys;

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joys, with an engagement to walk worthy of the privileges of it, unto all well-pleasing. This is evident from the Baptist's testimony: "He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true *." Faith's acceptance is an inward

* John iii. 33. M. CHEMNETIUS's exposition of this text is worthy of our notice, and suited to our purpose: "Et non sine gravi causa Baptista verbum *OBSIGNARE*, "quod in articulo Justificationis, semper Deo tribuitur, "de credentibus hoc loco usurpat. Fit enim in Justificatione *PACTUM* bonæ conscientię coram Deo; hoc est, "ut conscientia statuatur Deum nobis propitium esse. Illud "PACTUM Deus ex una parte obsignat Sacramentis et "Spiritu Sancto: Fides vero, ex altera parte in conscientia *PACTUM* illud obsignat, quod sciz. velit in illo "vera fiducia acquiescere:" Harmon. Evangel. p. 298.

This doctrine of Covenanting, in a personal manner, is notably exemplified both by Jacob and David: The former fills a Dissertation in the following pages, and the latter records his own practice in the following terms: "What shall I render unto the Lord? All his benefits to me. I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people:" So the 12th verse should be rendered. This is the only sense which can consist with sacred punctuation; and it is as if David had said, "What shall I present unto the all-sufficient Jehovah? I have nothing of mine own, indeed; but I devote all those graces he hath bestowed on me to his glory and service! Even all the blessings contained in the Cup of Salvation:" As it follows, "Oh Lord! truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant and the son of thine hand-maid: thou hast loosed my bands." What can a poor sinner devote to God, but what has been graciously bestowed on him? What hast thou, O man, that thou hast not received?

subscription.

subscription to the contents of the New Covenant: for the word imports such an action as persons perform when they set their hand unto a written deed, in token of their approving the contents of it; or, as when persons subjoin their name to a letter, in the ordinary manner in which they subscribe it.—Again, public covenanting is nothing else than a public and social acceptance of it, adapted to that œconomy which the covenanters enjoy: This will be evidenced, I hope, in all the instances which fall under our consideration. Hence, in some of them, the promises of the Covenant of Grace only are expressed, and the Church's Engagements unto Duty are implied. The stipulation is mutual, however, as these promises, by the working of God's good Spirit, were made effectual, to bring persons and churches to give themselves unto the Lord, as also, to take God for their God, for ever and ever. For example, God's promise to Abraham was, "I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward;" and his engagement is included, though not expressed. This is evident from his faith, patience, and resignation to the will of God.

4. THE Eternal Contract and our Engagement to Duties stand in the closest connection with each other, as the promises and privileges of that Covenant are the grandest motives to enter into these Engagements. Thus, Is it not a forcible motive to take hold of Jesus Christ, as the only propitiation for our sins, that God hath set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood? Is it not a cogent argument, to take his righteousness as the only foundation of our access to, and acceptance with God, that we have access, with boldness, into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus? Can there be a stronger argument for our taking hold of the Covenant of free and rich promise, as our only charter to the heavenly inheritance, than God's making with us an everlasting Covenant, even the sure mercies of David? Can there be a stronger excitement to take his word, for our perfect and only rule of faith and practice, than his giving us such a light to our feet, and such a lamp to our paths? Can any but an unbelieving and ungrateful heart refuse to take his Spirit, as the sole guide into all truth, seeing he has engaged to bestow such

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such a leader? "Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth." Can any hesitate whether we should, each for ourselves, avouch the Lord as our own God, seeing God hath said, "I am the Lord thy God?" If a God in covenant hath given us a system of pure ordinances, holy doctrine, spiritual worship, evangelical government and discipline, Why should not every person, who claims an interest in this covenanted God, resolve to continue in the faith, profession, and obedience of that system all the days of his life? The inspired system is conferred on us for our own good, as well as God's glory; That gratitude, therefore, which inspires with love to his glory, which disposes to prefer it above all things, will *also* inspire with love unto his truth, as the means of advancing it; and, of consequence, with the hatred of every false and wicked way: The more as our own advantage is inseparably connected with his honour, and immediately subordinated to it. If God promise the enlargement and continuance of the kingdom of Christ, as an encouragement to his subjects, Why should not they most ardently desire the enjoyment of that

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comfort? Why should they not use every mean of his appointment for obtaining it? In one word, If persons are infinitely obliged to God, being redeemed by his Son, sanctified by his Spirit, and saved by his Grace? Does not justice, as well as gratitude, say, we are not our own? Why should not we devote our services unto our rightful Lord, depending upon the power of his HOLY SPIRIT, that he may enable us to do our duty, unto the praise of his grace in all the churches. Amen*.

IN the LAST PLACE, We shall survey the State of the Church from the Fall of Adam to the Covenant between God and Noah, before the Flood.—And we may take a view of it both in its constitution and continuance. As to the FIRST we may observe,

I. THE person who erected this Church was no other than the Son of God. I find some authors who explain this appearance of the Father, I cannot easily reconcile myself to go into it however; “for no

* See the Bond for renewing our Solemn Covenants.

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man hath seen God at any time ; but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." I shall not stay to prove, that all the appearances, with which the Old Testament Church was favoured, were made by the Son God, as this point has been demonstrated, with a degree of evidence superior to reasonable contradiction, by others.—Our translation describes his appearance thus ; “ And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, in the cool of the day *.”

But, if we turn to the inspired original, we will find that it was the VOICE which WALKED ; the word VOICE and WALKING are connected together : And by the VOICE we are to understand the word, that is, the personal Word ; he then walked in the garden, as a prelude of his afterwards walking up and down in our world, in the fulness of time. The ancient Church understood this text of the PERSONAL WORD, and they were not deceived † ; the business

* Gen. iii. 8.

† For proof of what is above asserted, the learned reader may consult BOSTON'S Tractat. Stigmologic. p. 62 ; Dr OWEN'S Exercit. prefixed to his Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Vol. I. p. 114, 115.

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was of such importance as to require the greatest messenger the Father had to send. The works which were performed at this time were fully competent, and only responsible to the great God our Saviour.

2. THE condition in which the personal Word found the guilty pair was truly pitiable and wretched. They were engaged in the most wicked rebellion,—involved in the most atrocious guilt; and shame, the inevitable effect of conscious guiltiness, covered them, instead of that innocence with which they were originally adorned. The nakedness of guilt was infinitely greater than the paltry garment of fig-leaves could hide or cover. Sorrow and revenge, horror and despair, strike with infinitely greater torment than all the pleasures of Paradise could possibly allay. Now God thunders forth all the curses of a broken covenant: Conscience subscribes the awful indictment; the hand of Justice is lifted to fetch the fatal blow! For ought, that Adam could either imagine or expect, as he had ingulfed himself, and all his posterity, in the depths of sin, and an abyss of woe; so there was nothing for him but the

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the execution of the threatening! He had made God his enemy, Where was the angel in heaven, or the creature on earth, which durst stand his friend!

3. THE work accomplished by the Personal Word, on this important occasion, was amazingly gracious and merciful. He examined the criminals of the human kind, as to where they now were, and what they had done. They, on the other hand, acknowledge the fact, indeed, but ~~extenuate~~ the guilt—laying the blame, the ~~man~~ upon the woman, and the ~~woman~~ on the serpent. It is worthy of our notice, that the serpent was neither examined nor convicted, as there were no designs of mercy towards him.—He sentenced the serpent unto punishment: The brute is degraded from its dignity and excellence, because it had been prostituted as an instrument of seduction: It is also doomed to go upon its belly, and lick dust for its meat; and this is an ænigmatical representation, perhaps, of the devil's punishment, who had abused the serpent on this occasion. Though he was originally among the flowers of the creation, formed for re-
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lishing the most exquisitely refined and spiritual pleasures, now he is debased to the greatest wretchedness ; all the delight of which he can participate are base, as the dust of the street.—He denounced : threatening against the old serpent, which implied a promise of salvation unto a select company of the human family, through the incarnation and death of Christ. Man had nothing to expect but to share in the same lot with the devil, and to be made subject to his tyranny, seeing he had joined in confederacy with him, and made him his Lord and master. But, to the eternal admiration of men and angels, the Judge insures liberty to the captive, and destruction to the tyrant : “ I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed ; and he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This is the first gleam of gospel light upon a benighted world ; therefore it deserves our special consideration. First The publisher of this promise is also the performer of it : The Son of God is, at once, the herald to proclaim, and the hero to prosecute the war. Secondly, The parties between whom this war obtains are
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the old serpent, with all devils and finally-wicked men, on the one hand ; for they are the brood of the serpent, or a GENERATION OF VIPERS : And the Messiah, as the extraordinary SEED OF THE WOMAN, with the Woman herself, whom the devil had seduced, with all her believing SEED, on the other hand ; for Eve was the MOTHER OF ALL LIVING : That is, of all who are made spiritually alive, as Abraham was the FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL.

This arrangement of the parties instructs us of Wisdom's triumph over the devil, in ~~that~~ very instrument by which he had dishonoured God, and introduced evil into this world ; woman was first in the transgression, and first a subject of saving grace.

As also of the mysterious incarnation of the Son of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost. He is called the SEED OF THE WOMAN, as he was without father as man.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman."

Thirdly, He engaged to put ENMITY between the parties specified ; and to prosecute such a war as should issue in destruction to one of the parties, and prove eminently afflictive to the other, though completely

pletely victorious, and, finally, glorious. He threatens enmity, in direct opposition to that friendship which subsisted between the serpent and the woman. The deliverer threatened to break her covenant with death, and her agreement with hell, which could not be accomplished but by slaying her enmity against God,—infusing a hatred of sin and satan, and inspiring with love to God; for there was no change at all on the devil. The change was solely on the part of the woman; of a friend she becomes an enemy unto the serpent therefore he hates her. When the promise is accomplished on her soul, she adores that justice at which she trembled, she admires that holiness which she formerly detested. Thus, she became a pattern unto all her believing seed, as well as an emblem of the Church in every succeeding age. Hence, Christ seems to allude to her, when he speaks of the “WOMAN, and the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus Christ*.” H
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* “*Quamvis enim oraculo illo ad Serpentem sit institutus sermo, eique poena denuncietur, loquitur tamen*
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also threatened destruction to the old serpent, through the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. HE (for the original word is improperly translated IT) shall crush, or bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. He shall crush thy policy and power ; for the head is the seat of wisdom and strength, and a crush in the head is frequently mortal. This proclamation of war was eminently prosecuted, and fully executed on the cross ; on it the Son of God spoiled principalities and powers, he destroyed him who had the power of death, that is the devil. His

*"Deus ad cor Adami et Evæ, Serpenti pœnam talem denuncians quæ homini futura esset salutaris : nempe futuræ Serpenti et semini ipsius inimicitias cum muliere et Semine mulieris, et futuram penes Semen mulieris victoriâ de Diabolo. Non poterat Mulieri, cui Diabolus seductione sua pepererat inimicitiam cum Deo, et quam in castra sua pellexerat, cum Diabolo intercedere inimicitia, nisi per Justificationem Deo ipsâ conciliaretur, et per Sanctificationem in ipsa vinceretur dominium peccati. Quapropter Deus ponens inimicitias inter Diabolum et mulierem disponit mulieri Fœdus Novum Gratiæ justificantis et sanctificantis. Gratiæ vero auctorem promittit Semen fore illud mulieris, quod Satanæ caput contritum erat. Sed non absque agone, in quo prænunciat eventuras illi viâs et perpassiones, quippe Serpens ipsi conteret calcaneum. Calcaneus autem notat Christi *Θυρωπώστην* carnem, in qua terram calcavit." Clopen. De Fœdere Dei, Disput. v. Thes. 14.*

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sufferings were foretold, on the other hand: Though the Seed of the Woman be victorious, yet he must DIE to conquer! Such is the nature of this victory! If we understand the HEEL of his human nature, then the oracle was most literally fulfilled in the death of the cross: In that kind of death the foot was stretched out, and the HEEL pierced through with nails; accordingly, this bruising is expressed by another oracle thus, "They PIERCED my hands and my FEET." If we understand the HEEL of his mystical body, in its militant state, then the event has also verified the prediction: By means of the old serpent, they have had tribulation in the world. Nor can any good reason be assigned why both senses may not be included. This threatening was instructive of the doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ, and justification and eternal life through his death and righteousness, as also of the splendid triumph of the Captain of our Salvation over all the powers of hell; and his people being made conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him. — Again, He announced the divine displeasure against sin in the human race, and intimated to their common

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mon parents the evils it had introduced. Concerning which we may observe, That they have the nature of vindictive punishment to all who are under the curse of the covenant of works ; and the nature of paternal chastisement to all who are under the covenant of Grace. Though these evils are still continued on persons united to Christ, yet the curse is removed from them ; and, by the blessing of God, they are a means of mortification and salvation*.

4. THESE declarations were blessed for recovering liberty to these spiritual captives, and bringing them into a covenant relation to God†. Adam's faith appears from the new name he gave to Eve, immediately after this intimation : " And

* CHARNOCK ON 1 Tim. ii. 15.

† " Hoc pacto in Oraculo illo est Pactum promissionis, qua Adamus et Eva fuerunt *εὐαγγελισμένοι* EVANGELIO INITIATI, et cum illis initiatum Novum Fœdus Gratiæ ejusque Testamentum revelatum. Et Oraculum illud scriptum postliminio non caruit pleniori aliqua illustratione per verbum supernaturaliter factum, et Traditione Prophetica *διοπτύσσῃ* ad posteritatem propagatum, primo domatim, mox gregatim instituta Ecclesia."—Clopen. De Fœdere Dei, Disput. v. Thes. 15.

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Adam called his wife's name EVE; because she was the mother of all living *." That is, the mother of all who are made spiritually alive: And Eve's faith was secured in the promise already explained: For enmity, such as God creates, is nothing else than deliverance from the power and friendship of Satan; and enmity with the devil cannot imply less than the friendship of God, as the friendship of the world is enmity with God.—Now, acceptance of this declaration was, virtually at least, personal covenanting: By taking hold of the divine grant, they were bound, both by the authority of the promiser and the ties of gratitude, to improve all the grace of the promise, and to walk worthy of all the privileges contained in it. They were bound to maintain a constant warfare against the devil and all his works. And no one, who attends unto the nature and importance of a divine promise, can hesitate a moment, if persons ought to accept it; and, when

* The greatest part of Protestant writers have explained the name EVE in this manner. See, particularly, MARTYR, FAGIUS, PAREUS, the Marrow of MODERN DIVINITY, HERMAN. WIT. de Oecon. Fœderum; the former, p. 46, 12th edition; the latter, p. 568—570, edit. 3tio.

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once accepted, whether they ought to act in opposition or in conformity to the grace contained in it. This promise was a most reasonable testimony against that invasion which satan had made on the kingdom of God, and against the compliance of our first parents with his most wicked designs. Some think it is so ænigmatical, indeed, that Adam could not possibly understand it; but how such an imagination could come into the head of any who pays the least regard to the Scriptures, is not easy to conceive. Did not Adam know, and remember with the deepest sorrow, that death, the second death, came upon himself and all his posterity, by the subtilty of the serpent? Is it an impenetrable ænigma then, to promise deliverance under the notion of destruction to the cause of his ruin? Is not a complete removal of the cause of his disease, the most natural and effectual means of his cure? Did not Adam understand the promise in this light, when he imposed the name upon his wife, which has been already considered? The promise, of consequence, was not only understood, but also improved by Adam for his own salvation, and as a suitable testimony in

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in opposition to all that rebellion against God which had then obtained in the world.

5. THE rule under which these covenants were brought was the promise, in respect of faith ;—the law of nature, in respect of obedience ;—and the institution of sacrifices, in respect of both. As to the rule of obedience, we may observe, That the law of nature was a monitor, as to good and evil, prior to the giving of the law from Sinai, and to such hints, concerning it, as were given to Noah and the rest of the patriarchs. If gentile sinners, who are not enlightened by any promise, who have not the written law, do, by nature, the things contained in the law, and thus shew the works of the law written in their hearts ; much more may persons favoured with divine promises, and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, shew the works of the law written in their hearts, by writing it out again in their lives and conversations. By this means, May they not demonstrate that he has delineated God's law of new on their consciences ? The law written on man's heart in his
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state of primæval innocence, was greatly obscured by the fall ; but God preserved as much of it as is sufficient to leave men inexcuseable in every age ; and, by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, to guide in the paths of holiness in that one *. Accordingly, there were many evidences of such impressions upon the minds of the antediluvians, in various parts of their conduct, whether by acting in conformity or in opposition to them : Such as distinction of property, and the pursuit of lawful callings, in obedience to the precepts of the second table of the moral law ; faith in God, and love unto him, in agreeableness to those of the first.—Sacrifices, I have said, respected faith, as well as obedience ; and their institution was the rule of both. They deserve more ample consideration

* See OWEN'S Theologumena, lib. ii. cap. i. Thef. 6, 7, 8. Should any suppose the Patriarchs had other hints of God's will, as to their duty, I should not be forward to deny it ; though, after all, I cannot see the necessity of it : For, although the law of nature and the law from Sinai be the law of the covenant of works, materially considered, yet it is not as the law of nature, or yet as the covenant of works ; but, as enforced by evangelical motives, as obeyed in the strength of gospel grace, and as delineated, DE NOVO, on the heart, by the inscription of the Spirit,—that it becomes a rule of Sanctification.

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than I can, at present, undertake. We may attend for a moment, however, to their origin,—their oblation,—and their use. They did not originate from the invention of men, but in the especial institution of God *. It is readily confessed, the Mosaic history does not record their institution in so many words; but it is necessarily supposed even in that account, as well as many after revelations. The Sacred Historian, the very first time he mentions sacrifices, speaks also of their acceptance. Now, we have no reason to imagine that God ever accepted any thing, under the notion of worship, but what he had previously instituted. The divine institution of sacrifices is also the only foundation of

* Dr SPENCER declares for the human origin of sacrifices; and, in this particular, coincides with the greater part of Catholic writers, some of whom, as Bellarmine, carry them up before the fall. OUTRAM speaks with hesitancy, more than was becoming; but he candidly represented arguments on both sides. COCCEIUS pleads in favours of their human original prior to the Mosaic Oeconomy at least. His arguments are fully answered, and his hypothesis overturned by LEIDEKKER *Vis Veritatis*, Lib. iv. Controv. I.—See also CLOPPENBURG, *Schol. Sacrific.* cap. 2. The subject is also considered, with distinguished abilities and remarkable perspicuity, by Dr JENNINGS, in our language, *Jewish Antiq.* Vol. I. p. 305. et deinceps.

faith

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faith to the offerer. Faith without a foundation of God's laying, is no faith at all; of no avail, at least, unto the saving of the soul. But the primitive offerers had certainly a foundation of faith; for the Apostle assureth us, that, "BY FAITH, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."——In the antediluvian state there was no person, or order of persons, invested with an exclusive claim unto the priest's office. Some apprehend, that God conferred the office upon the **first-born**, indeed; but I can see no reason to persuade us that this was the case, till God destroyed Egypt's first-born: Then he set apart Israel's first-born unto himself, and afterwards took the Levites in their stead. But, under the antediluvian dispensation, Abel, who was a second son, had as good a right to offer sacrifice as Cain; and made a much better use of it*. The fact is, under that state the Churches

* Many excellent authors considered the priesthood as a prerogative of the first-born. CLOPPENBURG, ut supra, p. 15. But the reasons of Dr OWEN and VITRINGA have determined me against that opinion. Dr OWEN, on Heb. Exercit. Vol. II. p. 136. VITRINGA. Ob. Sac. Lib. ii. cap. 2, 3.

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were domestic, and every head of a family was bound to offer sacrifices for it ; but not to the exclusion of individuals for themselves, on personal considerations. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel appear to have been personal ones, and that of Job a family one. Neither does it appear, that, under this state, there was any place consecrated to the purpose of offering sacrifices ; but every one offered WHERE he pleased. It behoved somewhat, however, to be used for an altar. The creatures offered were both fruits and animals. The oblation of animals seems to have been especially designed as a figure of the grand sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and the oblation of fruits, to point out the evangelical obedience, and grateful services of the Church in every age, especially under the better œconomy. Nor was there any time, so far as we know, on which the patriarchs were obliged to sacrifice. The Sabbath of the seventh day was the only holy time then known ; and, being of a moral nature, and of moral obligation, they were bound to fill it up chiefly, if not wholly, with moral obedience. The season, as well as every thing else relative
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to sacrifices, came, by degrees, to be particularly ascertained ; for God had reasons worthy of himself, not to fix all things concerning them at once.—As to the use of sacrifices, especially expiatory ones, I shall only note, that as they intervened between the promise of the Messiah's sufferings and the accomplishment of it, so they had a respect unto both. They looked forward to the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, and held it up, in **PROSPECTIVE**, unto the faith of the offerer. They looked backward to the making of the promise, and served as memorials to bring it to remembrance ; as well as pledges of its future, but certain accomplishment*.

* CLOPPENBURG. Schol. Sacrific. cap. 4.—I intended to have given an extract from this chapter, and some other parts of his works ; but, the whole is so excellent, I found myself at a loss, when I began to select, and in danger of omitting the most valuable parts. I heartily wish, that the reader, capable of understanding his works, were possessed of them. He would find much acute criticism ; many thoughts, not more new than just ; genuine zeal for soundness in the faith, tempered with candour even to the very enemies of it. Perhaps Professor Mark never did a better service to the Church, than in collecting and superintending the publication of his grandfather's works.—Works that afforded Witfius some of the best hints which are to be found in his *Oeconomia* ; and Witfius's extracts filled me with avidity to peruse the whole ; and, when I was gratified, the flock agreed with the sample.

Expiatory sacrifices have nothing to recommend them, on the principles of nature, indeed; hence bloody sacrifices were derided, as madness, by the greatest sages of heathen antiquity: But they have ends worthy of divine wisdom, on the principles of gospel grace. Taken in connection with the promise, from which they ought never to be separated, they afford a striking view of the guilt and demerit of sin, in the struggles and groans of the expiring animals; as also, in the fire coming down from heaven to consume the flesh. Who knows the power of his wrath!—They also afford a view of the substitution of Christ in the law-room of sinners: The innocent, meek, dumb lambs endured pangs and fire to prefigure the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Thus, they afforded hopes of pardon, acceptance, and eternal life unto such as offered them by faith in Jesus Christ. Another use of them was, a typical confirmation of the promises of the Covenant of Grace, and to turn it into a Testament, typically, till it should be afterwards really ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ. In one word, by sacrifices God applied Christ's death and righteousness

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righteousness, to Old Testament saints, in much the same manner as he applies the same now by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper * ; but the latter mode of application is, by much, the clearest.

SECONDLY, We shall now attend unto the CONTINUANCE of this Church in the enjoyment of the privileges, and discharge of the duties above described : And she continued, in some measure of conformity unto her original constitution, for near the space of one hundred and twenty-eight years. Probably it was in the hundred and twenty-ninth year, that Cain and Abel offered those sacrifices, from which the former took occasion to slay the latter : For Seth, who came into the world soon after the death of Abel, was born in the hundred and thirtieth year of Adam's life. The defection, into which a part of this Church was immersed, did not consist so much in the corruption of worship, in respect of its external form, as in the want of faith in, and love to God ; which produced want of love among the worshipers

* Vide Disput. Sedan. Tom. I. p. 796.

themselves,

themselves, while the observance of ordinances was some way kept up among them. Passing by the Jewish fables about the superior excellence of Abel's sacrifice, we may satisfy ourselves with treading on hallowed ground. The Apostle observes a superior principle, even saving faith : " By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." That is a SLAIN SACRIFICE ; for so the word imports *. He looked forward to the death of Christ : Whereas, it is probable, Cain offered only a thank-offering ; without faith in, or even any respect to the Redeemer's expiatory sacrifice. Perhaps not unlike the Pharisee, who was willing to thank God that he was not as other men. Again, Abel offered the firstling of his flock, and of the fat of it ; the first-born, being the chief in his possession, and being afterward appropriated to the service of God by divine institution. But Cain, so far as we know, made no such choice : He was so void of love to God, that he thought he might be put off with any thing. His ambition seems to have equaled his unbelief and enmity ; there-

* *Gen. iv.*

fore,

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fore, he is transported with fury, and pinned away with envy, at the rejection of his own sacrifice, and the acceptance of Abel's. Adam had certainly the same power to exercise ecclesiastic discipline in his family, as Noah had afterwards; both families being domestic churches. God took the reproof of Cain, however, into his own hand: But reproof, or censure of any kind, indeed, will not issue in reformation, though managed with divine precedence itself, where the heart is unrenewed. Cain's corruption swelled like a stemmed torrent, at the divine admonition; and secret malice suddenly rose into determined murder, which, at last, disgorged itself on innocent Abel. Abel, the first who left this world, dies a saint; the first-fruits of victory, to the seed of the woman, over death, and him who had the power of death, that is the devil. Cain lived a guilty criminal, tormented by the dreadful sentence of the Supreme Judge, rousing up his guilty conscience into a flame of absolute and final despair. How preferable! How infinitely preferable was the lot of the former to that of the latter! If it be far better to depart and be with Christ, than to live in a state of grace, in
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the most exalted measure of it; How much better is it to depart, with the crown of martyrdom, than to have nothing in expectation, against the world to come, but unmixed vengeance! and, though in all the affluence which this world can command for the present, driven out from the PRESENCE OF THE LORD*!

By

* Le CLERC's opinion, that the PRESENCE OF THE LORD was the name of a particular place, where Adam dwelt, is unworthy of confutation, as it nearly amounts to an express contradiction of the Holy Ghost, who frequently calls his Church by that name. Job i. 6.

The sentence which God passed on Cain deserves more minute investigation. It is expressed to considerable disadvantage in our translation, thus, "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." Gen. iv. 11, 12. Junius and Tremellius render it, "Nunc itaque tu maledictus esto: EXUL ab ista terra quæ aperuit os suum ad excipiendum sanguinem fratris a manu tua." i. e. "Be thou accursed: be thou an exile from that [spot] of earth which opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood at thy hand." The original is somewhat obscure, being elliptic; and our translators have been misled by omitting the capital distinctive within the verse, and also by neglecting the supplement which the context affords: But Junius's translation is as properly pointed as supplied. Our translators seem to have understood verse 11. as parallel to Gen. iii. 17. "Cursed be the ground for thy sake." But something more dreadful is certainly intended. The barrenness

By this excision the old leaven of malice and wickedness was, for once, purged out of the antediluvian Church; and she was supplied with a new seed in the person of Seth. "And she (Eve) bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God," said she, "hath appointed me another seed, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." The seed

thorns and briars of the earth are consistent enough with enjoying the presence of God through Jesus Christ; but this was such a punishment as included separation from the smiles of his reconciled countenance. Besides, that punishment which was announced to Adam is also denounced, but with greater horrors, against Cain, in verse 12. already quoted. According to Junius's translation, verse 11. contains, FIRST, A Sentence of Excommunication. SECONDLY, A Sentence of Banishment.

1. A Sentence of Excommunication more dreadful than any church, in ordinary circumstances, can pronounce.—A sentence only competent to God himself, or the extraordinary officers of the church, who are capable of discerning the spirits, and of judging the eternal state. This sentence seems to be parallel to that in 1 Corinth. xvi. 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA;" ACCURSED AT THE COMING OF THE LORD.—Be thou accursed! What is this but the anticipation of the sentence, from a judgment seat? "Depart from me YE CURSED!"

2. A Sentence of Banishment, "Be thou an exile from that earth which opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood at thy hand:" That is, from that spot of this

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seed of Cain, though ejected from the presence of the Lord, flourished in the world till the flood. The Church was preserved pure in the families of Adam and Seth ; and in many more, perhaps, for more than the space of an hundred years. Some divines imagine, that irreligion and impiety sprang up again, in these families, in the days of Enos, who was born about an hundred and six years after the death of Abel : Yea, some have averred, that Enos himself was not only an idolater, but the

earth where thy brother's blood was shed, as the seed of the Church. It was not consistent with the Church's safety, that her murderer should dwell any longer in the midst of her. God had ends worthy of himself, however, for sparing that life which Cain had forfeited : Probably he was spared at this time because he had in his loins the inventors of the fine arts. See verses 20, 21. Should any hesitate about the propriety of supplying EXU: from a following verse, I hope he will be satisfied by consulting Glassii Gram. Sacr. p. 700. In rhetorical speeches, it is nothing uncommon for the Hebrew writers to place the relative before the antecedent, at the distance even of a verse or two : And hence, abrupt speeches must be supplied from the subsequent as well as from the preceding context. E. G. Song. i. 2. " Let him (the King) kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." Here the term KING must be supplied from verse 4. to complete the sense. Psal. lxxvii. 1. " His foundation is in his holy mountain." That is JEHOVAH's, from verse 2. And Psal. lxxii. 4. See Glassium, above quoted.

very

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very founder of idolatry : But upon what grounds this last charge is exhibited, few, besides themselves, can say. It is so far from being supported, that it is really overthrown by the Mosaic history of the men of his time : “ And to Seth, to him also, there was born a son ; and he called his name Enos. Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.” So our translation has it in the text ; but on the margin it is rendered, “ Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord.”

The marginal translation, I humbly judge, is the just one. They called themselves by the name of the Lord, as children are called after the name of their father. They called themselves by him in dedicating themselves unto him, and avouching their relation to him as sons : For the discriminating title, by which the religious children of Seth were distinguished from the profane brood of Cain, was that of THE SONS OF GOD ; and it continued to be the usual designation of the godly until the days of Job *. In the days of Enos then, the Sons of Seth avowed the family to

* Job i. 6.

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which they belonged, in opposition to the seed of the serpent. And their avowal was such as cannot imply less than covenant-dedication; for the expression is perfectly similar to that of the Prophet, "Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Covenanters were called by THE NAME OF THE LORD, or THE SONS OF GOD, in the antediluvian state; and by the NAME OF JACOB, or ISRAELITES, in the period to which the oracle refers. And the connection leaves us no room to doubt, but calling one's self by the name of Jacob is a federal action; for it is ranked among other actions confessedly of that kind: "One shall say, I am the Lord's: and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with the hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel*."

ALL

* If. xlv. 5. For confirming the sense of Gen. iv. 26. I beg leave to insert what C. VITRINGA has advanced on this subject: "Sed ipsum nostrum **אֲנִי** FORMÆ ACTIVÆ cum voce **קָוָה** constructum, eodem sensu summitur apud Mosē (Gen. iv. 26.) TUM CÆPTUM EST APPELLARI DĒ NOMINE JEHOVÆ. Quæ versio hoc tempore doctis interpretibus merito probatur. h. e. dici cœperunt filii Dei. Si quistamen hic servare velit significationem formæ activæ interpretatio eadem erit." In this the

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ALL the saints, who lived from the beginning of the world till this time, might have opportunity to join in this transaction, except Abel ; for no one of them was dead, but he, so far as we know. But this state of religion did not much survive that race of patriarchs, which was honoured to advance it. Enos lived, indeed, to transmit the
Truth

the learned author coincides, as frequently, with Dr OVEN, Vide Theologumen. Lib. II. cap. 3. Thes. 6.
*"Duo ideo hæc verba denotant. Primo, segreges cœtus
 "ad Dei cultum solennem peragendum, pios constituisse.
 "Deinde, nomen suscepisse peculiare cultorum seu Filio-
 "rum Dei, quo ad alium usque defectionem usi sunt. Ita
 "separatim Dei nomen solenniter invocabant ; et Dei
 "nomine vocati sunt ; hoc est Cultores, seu Filii Dei.
 "Utrumque sensum probant nostrates interpretes, nam ut
 "in textu legunt. Then began men to call upon the
 "name of the Lord : Ita addunt in margine. To call
 "themselves by the name of the Lord." But before either
 of these authors explained the text in this sense, it was
 so understood by CORNELIUS BERTRAM, who had a hand
 in the French translation, used in the Church of Gene-
 va, and by the Protestants in France ; and in several o-
 ther works, which did honour to his name : Such as, the
 De Politia Judaica, &c. But the work to which I refer
 is, Lucubrationes Franktallenses, cap. 1. The proof he ad-
 vanceth for this sense of the text is too copious to be insert-
 ed entire. I must be content with the following extract:
 "Quod attinet ad vers. 26. illius ejusdem cap. 4. Phrasin
 "habet quæ maxime proprie illud ipsum sonat quod dix-
 "imus, sciz. APPELLARE ALIQUEM DE ALICUJUS ALIE-
 "RIUS NOMINE, ET AB ILLIUS IPSIUS NOMINE AGNOMI-
 "NATIONEM ASSUMERE. Hoc certe confirmare possum
 " multis*

Truth to Noah: and, before his death, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of Christ's coming to judgment, led an exemplary life, and miraculously escaped death, to assure the sons of God, in that age, of a state of future glory in heaven. By the time that Enos died, however, the Church was greatly corrupted, as will be explained when we consider the occasions of Noah's Covenant.

" multis locis ex S. literis ad eam rem prolatis, in quibus verbum KARA, cum passive tum etiam active in eum sensum usurpatur: sed unum aut alterum ex illis proferre mihi satis fuerit. Certe eadem hic phrasis Ps. xlix. 12. appellarunt in (i. e. de) nominibus suis super Terras; hunc sensum habet ut velint filii Korachi eos de quibus agunt etiam hac ratione conari ut nomen suum apud homines perpetuunt, quod de suo nomine appellent illa castella, arces, insulas, atque ædes vel nimium insolentes, in quibus suas habitationes collocant. Quæ sententia confirmatur ex his quæ Jobus notat. c. iii. v. 14. Num xxxii. 42. Porro ut eandem prorsus Mosis sententiam in hac ipsa phrasi apud eos prophetas qui sunt γράφοι Mosis interpretes agnoscamus. Is. xlv. 5. etiam Is. xliii. 7. lxv. 1." &c.

DISSERTATION I.

ON NOAH'S COVENANT.

AS God gives a general view of his perfections in the works of creation and providence, so he affords a special display of his glory, in the erection and preservation of his Church. The Sacred History is properly a history of Providence; it is chiefly intended to exhibit this glory. It is but little, indeed, that can be comprehended in so small a compass as the Mosaic history of the period from the Fall to the Flood, compared with the vast number of events which must have obtained in that long tract of time: Yet we are not left without testimonies of God's goodness, in admitting persons to fellowship with himself, on the one hand; and evidences of their gratitude, by their holy obedience, on the other.—Amongst the various testimonies of God's favour to the saints, that bestowed on Noah is not the least signal.

In

64 DISSERTATION I. PART I.

In considering which, for order's sake, we shall distribute it into two parts; in conformity to the two different divine manifestations with which Noah was favoured.

P A R T I.

GEN. vi. 18.

THESE words represent God's care to preserve his Church, as well as the world. Said God, "And behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven: And every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my Covenant."

THE following enquiries will serve, in some measure, to explain these words, taken in their connection.—I. Who are the Parties in this Transaction.—II. What are the Parts of it.—III. How it was Confirmed.—IV. On what Occasion it was made. After which I shall add a few Reflections on the whole.

FIRST, I shall enquire Who are the PARTIES in this Covenant. They are no other than the Most High God, on the one part; and Noah, with his Seed, on the other.

I. THE

PART I. DISSERTATION I. 65

1. THE great author of this Covenant is a God of grace. The person covenanting was the Son of God, not excluding, but revealing the Father and the Holy Ghost. It was that same Jehovah who said, My Spirit shall not always strive with men; namely the sinners of that generation:—that same Jehovah, whose omniscient eye pierced into all their hearts, penetrated into all their wicked purposes, and marked all their enormous transgressions:—that God, who had such a resentment against sin, as to crush the sinners on account of it; as a potter dasheth to pieces a vessel in which there is no pleasure. On the other hand, it is that Jehovah who conferred grace on Noah, and upheld him preaching righteousness unto a heedless and hardened generation; while his holy soul was grieved with their dreadful abominations. When the Son of God spake, in this familiar manner, to Noah, it is not improbable that he appeared in human form; as he had done to Adam immediately after the fall. Such appearances being pledges and preludes of his future incarnation.

2. THE other party in this Covenant was Noah; and, as he covenanted for himself, in particular, so he was also considered as the head of his family. As God took his sons into the ark, so he took them into covenant along with him likewise. The seed of Noah

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are

are expressly mentioned in an after covenant, and evidently included in this one. In this transaction then, Noah may be considered,—As one of the ancestors of the Messiah, the principal and extraordinary Seed of the Woman *; of consequence, this Covenant had a respect unto the first promise, and was a necessary step towards the accomplishment of it. God saw meet to preserve the true religion in that family and society, in which was the ancestors of the promised Seed; and it was necessary to secure their natural lives until he raised up successors unto them.—As one of the types of that glorious Seed. As to many of the ancestors of the Messiah, according to the flesh, it may be justly doubted whether they were types of him or not; but Noah prefigured him in many respects. The very names of the ancient Hebrews were usually expressive of some remarkable quality in the person on whom, or some remarkable incident on the occasion at which they were imposed. Some of them seem likewise to have been imposed by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The name NOAH seems to have been of this kind: It imports REST, pointing forward to the glorious rest of the Messiah. Noah's work at the ark was also an emblem of the work of salvation by Jesus Christ. Both Noah and Jesus were preachers of righteousness.

* Luke iii. 36.

ness unto impenitent sinners. But Noah was chiefly a figure of our Redeemer, as covenant-promises were made unto him, as the representative of his seed. If Abraham was a type of Christ, as unto Abraham, and his seed, the promises were made, Why may not Noah be a type of him, on this account, likewise?—As the father of that family in which the Church of the living God, both visible and invisible, was preserved. As he belonged to the latter, he was eminent in grace; as he belonged to the former, he was no less eminent for a holy profession and an agreeable conversation. In the former view, the sacred historian remarks, “That Noah, a just man, was perfect in his generation.” Should any enquire how he obtained this character; the same historian answers, “He found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” And the Apostle adds, “That he was an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” By this righteousness he was justified from all his iniquities, and accepted as righteous in God’s sight. He was also a gracious person, being endued with the Holy Ghost, in his gracious influences and saving operations; such as, faith, fear, love, and gospel-sincerity, or perfection.—In the latter view, he was an evangelical preacher of that righteousness by which he was justified. By his doctrine, he bore a public testimony unto the truths then revealed, as well as against all those errors and immoralities which then prevailed in the world.

And he was as exemplary in his religious deportment as sound and pathetic in his sermons: HE WALKED WITH GOD. Neither the crooked examples nor bitter reproaches of that generation could bias his conduct, or shake his confidence; but he persevered in condemning it, even when he was incessant at a throne of grace for preventing and sparing grace to it. As Job prayed for his friends *, and Daniel for his countrymen †, so did Noah for the old world. Hence he is ranked with them, by the Holy Spirit, as a person whose prayers were greatly prevalent at a throne of grace ‡. Such is the harmony between CONDEMNING sin, both by profession and practice; and, at the sametime, wishing well to the souls of sinners, by commending them to God! It is highly probable, God used his prayers as a means of keeping off the flood while he was a-building the ark.—It is only in this latter respect that Noah was a pattern for covenanters in gospel days. Happy were it for the Church of God at this time, and this land in particular, had we many covenanters of his spirit.

SECONDLY, We must now consider the PARTS of this Covenant; and, in surveying them, we shall—Specify the Privileges granted to Noah,—The Duties which God required of him,—The Relation between this Covenant and

* Job xlii. 10. † Dan. ix. 3—21.

‡ Ezek. xiv. 14.

those Obligations which the Church was under, antecedent to the making of it:—Then we must enquire, How far these things are for our Direction and Comfort.

I. I MUST Specify the Privileges which God granted to Noah at this time. Moses describeth them thus, “ But with thee will I establish my Covenant: and thou shalt come into the ark; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons wives with thee.” These words, taken in connection, contain a promise both of temporal and spiritual salvation.

1. THEY contain a promise of Temporal Salvation. The Apostle informs us, That Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house; and the words of Moses cannot imply less than a temporal salvation: For they stand opposed to a threatening of temporal, as well as spiritual destruction to the rest of mankind: “ And I, behold I, bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven: and every thing that is in the earth shall die.—But with thee will I establish my covenant,” &c. This promise, then, was a firm security against that approaching desolation; and the event most exactly answered the prediction, as appears from the following chapters of the Mosiac history.

2. THEY

2. THEY contain a promise of Spiritual Salvation, typified and exhibited to the faith of Noah by this temporal salvation. Some eminent divines have doubted, I grant, whether spiritual salvation might be contained in this foederal grant: But there is no room, I humbly judge, to hesitate in this matter. For the warning God gave to Noah was a foundation to his faith, even such faith as is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for: It took up with things NOT SEEN AS YET; therefore, the promise, which is the foundation of it, must exhibit things not seen likewise: For faith cannot reach farther than its foundation. And what are these UNSEEN things? Are they not the things which are ETERNAL *? Moreover, by this promise, Noah was constituted an HEIR OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH †; which is a most distinguished part of a spiritual salvation. Now, to constitute one an heir, there must be a deed of conveyance, by which the inheritance is transferred. The Apostle Peter also assures us, That the salvation obtained by the death and resurrection of Christ is the antitype of Noah's deliverance: "Few, that is, eight persons, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ‡." Though Noah's deliverance is reckoned among the darkest of types; yet, from the apostolic account of

* 2 Cor. iv. 18. † Heb. xi. 7. ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 20. 21.

PART I. DISSERTATION I. 71

it, it is plain that it was not so dark but Noah's faith saw the antitype in it.

II. I SHALL now specify the Duties which God required of Noah and his family: And they were,

1. THE exercise of all that grace which God had infused into him; respecting, both the frame of his heart and the conduct of his life. Various instances of which are specified in the above sketches we have drawn of his character.

2. NOAH was bound to some acts of obedience suited to his peculiar circumstances, which were the means of his preservation. By the special appointment of God, he was bound to prepare an ark to the saving of his house. And, in this, he was a type of the Messiah's working out eternal salvation for his people.—He, together with his family, was obliged to enter into the ark. In this respect he was a figure of perishing sinners, betaking themselves unto Christ for refuge; as also of their leaving this world behind, and putting it under their feet. These things were necessary for the preservation of the Church in that period; and instructive emblems to her in every age. By them also, he CONDEMNED the world lying in wickedness*.

III. I

* "Promissio semper includit obedientie requisitionem. Est enim obedientia, nihil aliud, quam MEDIORUM
"UM

III. I SHALL next attend unto the Connection between this Covenant and those Objections which the Church was under, antecedent to the making of it.

1. THE first promise was engrossed into covenant; and the executing this covenant was a step towards the accomplishment of promise. The first promise secured a full final victory to the Seed of the woman against the seed of the serpent. By this covenant the brood which the old serpent had hated in the old world, were destroyed; and the seed of the woman preserved from destruction: For Noah's family contained, at that time, both the extraordinary and spiritual seed of the woman.

2. THE phrase, used in the original, evidently imports, that this transaction properly covenant-renewal *. Said

"UM AD VITAM PROMISSAM OBTINENDAM INSTI-
 "TUTUM, DEBITA OBSERVANTIA. Ubi autem ea ob-
 "servantia, quæ in fœdere requiritur moralis solummodo
 "atque ideo fundamentum generale alibi habet,
 "in ipso fœdere, nempe in lege naturæ, atque per
 "deum tantum acceptum et Deo gratum redditur,
 "promissio fit pura revelationis, nomen fœderis pro
 "fœderationi peculiariter ascribitur." OWEN, Theol. Li-
 cap. I. Thes. 6.

* *וַיִּבְרָךְ*. The verb which the inspired penman uses in this form at least, (sciz. Hiphil) signifies to bless.

"With thee will I establish my covenant." He does not promise to make a covenant which had no previous existence; but to RATIFY and CONFIRM what he had formerly made. Now, as the first promise was the most ample grant of salvation which the antediluvian Church enjoyed, so far as we know; and the covenant which was made in the days of Enos the most explicit engagement unto duties; it is but reasonable to conclude, that this covenant of Noah's was an establishment of both: And also, an accommodation of them to his peculiar circumstances. Accordingly, this came afterward to be the usual phrase by which covenant renovation, or confirmation, was expressed.

As to the difference between this covenant and the Church's previous engagements, it consisted in the institution of some new types; such as, the ark, the flood, and the injunction of various duties relative unto them. I shall only add, these things were not added to the promise to change the nature of it, much less to disannul it; but, on the contrary, to establish and confirm it.

and the idea of renovation is by no means inconsistent with that of ESTABLISHMENT, given in our translation. Hence, the best of critics in the sacred language have translated the verb in this form, RESTITUIT. E. G. OPI- TIUS, BUXTORF, and STOCKIUS, &c. They generally add CONFIRMAVIT likewise.

IV. I SHALL now, in the last place, enquire, How far these things are for our Imitation and Comfort.

IT may be answered, That these types afford food to the faith of the members, even of the Gospel Church. The ark, indeed, is long since crumbled into dust; and the waters of the deluge swept off the face of the earth many thousand years ago; but the signification of them still remains: Yea, it appears, with superior lustre, under the Gospel Oeconomy. The typical parts of this Covenant are as full of strong consolation to the children of God, as of horror and terror to his enemies.—Should any insist, That this Covenant cannot be for our imitation, unless we could be in danger of another deluge.—It may be answered, We do not plead that it is, in all respects, imitable. The truth is, there is no federal transaction that ever obtained in the Church, in all respects imitable by a succeeding church; as there cannot be two periods of her, in all things, perfectly similar: But every covenant ought to be adapted to the season of it. It is enough if this covenant be imitable in some things; and the gracious dispositions, as well as the moral actions of these covenanters are, in every respect, worthy of our most exact imitation: And, as to other things, they are not the less instructive that they are inimitable; as they teach

teach the children of God to comply with the calls of his word and providence, however much the way of duty be neglected by the multitude,—however cross it may lie unto the maxims of carnal wisdom, and though it should even oblige us to CONDEMN the world which lieth in wickedness; they also serve to convey emblematical instructions, which leave strong and lasting impressions on the minds of men.

—If any still insist, That God's making a covenant with Noah, or any other person, is no pattern for persons making a covenant with God.—I would answer, The obligation is mutual, and though the exception should be granted, in its full force, it makes nothing against the imitation of Noah's example by us, in accepting God's proposal. The fact is, God sometimes made his gracious proposal to be expressed, and his people's acceptance implied; at other times, his gracious proposal is presupposed, and their engagement expressly declared. And there were signal reasons for God's gracious promises being verbally expressed at this time, while Noah's engagement is only implied (and it may be fairly deduced from his obedience to God's commandments, particularly, to build the ark); namely, the want of a written word containing promises suited to his circumstances. Whereas, the case is otherways, especially since the canon of Scripture has been completed: For the proposal God now makes to every person to

whom his word comes, is, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." God's proposal, standing registered in the sacred volume, is of the same use in all ages, as his declaration was to Noah; and Noah is one of that most illustrious CLOUP OF WITNESSES whom we ought to follow. Upon the whole, though we cannot imitate God in making sovereignly gracious promises, yet his example affords an argument unto the practice of covenanting: If the Most High God deign to bind himself, by way of covenant, to us, Is it too much that we bind ourselves, by way of covenant, to him?

THIRDLY, I shall enquire, How this Covenant was Confirmed: And it was ratified,

1. By the Ark: The ark which Noah built as a mean of preservation to his natural life, was also a figure of Christ, the author of eternal salvation. The analogy is obvious, in the following instances at least:

THE Ark was not an invention of man, but the contrivance of infinite wisdom. That generation was so far from dreaming of any such thing, as either necessary or possible, that they derided Noah's undertaking as the effect of a strong delirium. In like manner, the salvation of sinners, by Christ crucified, is so far superior to human invention, that, even after

after it is revealed, it is deemed foolishness by many supposed sons of science in every age.

—The Ark was able to sustain the shock of the deluge, when all things without it, and beside it, were utterly overthrown. The Lord Jesus Christ alone was able to sustain the shock of Almighty vengeance, due unto the violators of the divine law, while all who shall be found without him must eternally perish. The fountain of the great deep from below, the cataracts of heaven from above, broke forth upon the ark, while boisterous billows rolled in upon it from every side; but it weathered the storm, and rested safely, with all its inhabitants, upon the destined mountain. The Redeemer came also into deep waters, where the FLOODS overflowed him: He sustained the wrath of the Father from above, the fury of devils from below, and the rage of men on every hand; but he rode out the storm, and entered safely into the haven of glory. Now he is a covert from the tempest: Israel may now say, the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our heads, had not the Lord been on our side. “Surely, in FLOODS of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him.—Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.”

—Few persons were saved by the Ark, and few believe on Christ to the saving of the soul. Many are called, but FEW are chosen: FEW enter

life, about one thousand five hundred and thirty-six years after the creation of the world ; and a thousand years after that foederal transaction which obtained in the days of Enos. The Occasions of this Covenant were,

1. SUCH as originated from extreme corruption and wickedness, which prevailed in the old world. While they indulged themselves in luxury and riot, they were ready, like modern debauchees, to compliment each other as persons of a very GOOD HEART ; but one who observed the heart with the greatest accuracy, and judged of it with infinite faithfulness and certainty, declares, " That EVERY imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually." And as the legions of lusts which long brooded in the heart, at length broke forth like a mighty torrent, to deluge the world with sin, so the righteous judge saw meet to deluge it with water and wrath. Their in-bred corruption burst forth,——In sensuality and sinful associations: In the days of Noah, they did eat and drink, they married and gave in marriage, even until the day that Noah entered into the ark. The children of Enos, who were, by profession, the Sons of God, were unequally yoked with the daughters of men ; that is, the infidel race of Cain. Gaiety and vanity were the motives of this choice ; and a race of sturdy rebels against God the fruits of it. Wantonness and violence of every kind took the place of religion and

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and righteousness among the young generation.—In Luxury, which ever demands the pillars of oppression and fraud to support it; for, by how much men pay a superlative regard to the gratification of their own appetites, by so much must they either rob, or deceive their neighbour to obtain it. Their desires could not be satisfied in the use of lawful means. Their dissipation gave them inclination, and their gigantic stature gave them ability to oppress. The Spirit of God expressly declares, That “the earth was filled with violence;” but the particular species of it is not ascertained. The term is of such extensive import as may express both rapine on the property, and cruelty on the persons of men. For this latter species of wickedness, these sinners had the pattern of Cain’s murder of Abel; and Lamech, the polygamist, Cain’s great-grandson, probably took the lead among them in the arts of luxury and dissipation.—In one word, this corruption burst forth in all manner of wickedness: “God looked down upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.” Every one of them, except Noah, had gone astray, each to his own particular lust. The disease was inveterate, the contagion universal! Now it was time to put a stop to this awful current by covenant renovation.

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2. THE Occasions of this covenant were such as originated from the circumstances of the ancient covenants. The reformation which obtained in the days of Enos was much decayed, by reason of the death of those covenants, on the one hand; and the almost universal depravity of the young generation on the other. Long as the lives of antediluvian patriarchs were, no one of them lived quite a thousand years; and the federal transaction which obtained in the days of Enos was a thousand years, at least, prior to this covenant with Noah. This covenant-renovation was requisite at this time then, as a means of raising up a succession of seed to fill up the place of those eminent, but departed reformers, as well as to confirm such as were already raised up.

3. SUCH as took rise from the peculiar circumstances of Noah and his family, the present covenants. He had extremely arduous work put into his hand; therefore, he much needed special assistance in it, and peculiar comfort under all the opposition which might be expected from such a wicked generation on account of it. He was bound to CONDEMN THE WORLD lying in wickedness: Now, no one, who has counted the cost of such a work, can suppose he will be able to finish his testimony, and still retain the favour of the world. The friendship of the world is enmity with God,
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as the friendship of God inevitably draws along with it the enmity of the world. Noah's circumstances, then, required an assurance of an interest in God, as a covenanted God, to fortify him against all the malice, mockery, and persecution of sinners. "Methinks (says Bishop Hall) I see those monstrous sons of Lamech coming to Noah, and asking him, What he meant by that strange work? To whom, when he reports God's purpose and his, they go away, laughing at his idleness, and tell one another, in sport, That too much holiness had made him mad: Yet cannot they all flout Noah out of his faith; he preaches, and builds, and finishes!" This covenant was Noah's support under heavy persecutions, as well as in the prospect of awful judgments.

FIFTHLY, I shall now make a few REFLECTIONS on the whole.

I. THIS subject discovers the Sovereignty of God, in the various methods he takes to preserve his Church. At one time, he casts corrupt members out of the Church, as in the case of Cain; at another time, he separates her from the world, and takes her into covenant with himself, as in the days of Enos. Sometimes he preserves his Church among her enemies, as in the hundred and twenty years in which the ark was a-building; at other times, he draws such a partition wall between her

and her enemies, that they are not allowed to exist together on the same world; as in the days of Noah, at and after the flood. He put a period to the exercise of his patience respecting his enemies, and swept them off the stage of this world to make room for his Church, and to give her peace.

2. THE paucity of covenanters is no just argument against the performance of the duty of Covenanting. How small was their number on this occasion, compared with the vast multitude which despised the divine warning.—Eight persons stand forth against a whole world.

3. TIMES of universal apostacy and impiety, as also of approaching judgments, are fit seasons for solemn Covenanting. Such were the times of Noah; and such are our times. If the argument, or rather the excuse, which is in the mouth of many, be valid now; namely, That the times are bad, and, therefore, not a fit season for this duty; it would also have been valid in the days of Noah. But God makes no account of this at all; he rather makes the sin and danger of the time an argument for the practice of this duty.

4. God usually gives timely warning to sinners, before he inflicts his most awful judgments. The flood was a most dreadful calamity; but that generation got an hundred and
twenty

twenty years to make ready for its approach. Such timely warning, where it is taken, makes persons enter into the ark of God's providing for the salvation of their souls: Where it is not taken, as was the case with the greatest part of the old world, sinners are left absolutely inexcusable. Jerusalem had more than forty years warning of its final destruction; and the prophets, particularly Isaiah and Jeremiah, gave timely warning of its destruction by the Chaldeans: But, as to the greater part, the warning was contemned in both cases. We have such standing warnings in the word as supersede all new warnings from heaven: And all that is incumbent upon those watchmen who are set upon Zion's walls is, to apply these warnings, by the direction of the Spirit, unto particular circumstances: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, 'Thou shalt surely die: and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity: but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay

lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die : because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered ; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned ; also thou hast delivered thy soul *."

P A R T I I.

G E N. ix. 1—17.

I SHALL pursue the same method in this as in the preceding Part : And,

FIRST, I shall consider the PARTIES in this Covenant : And the account which the sacred historian affords of them is rather more copious than in the foregoing transaction.

1. THE author and principal party of the Covenant is the same divine person as in the preceding one ; even the Son of God : The very same person who was authorised to declare the Father unto men ; for no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son,

* Ezek. iii. 17—21.

who

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who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

2. ON the other part were Noah and his Sons, as well as every living creature.—The Son of God covenanted with Noah and his Sons: Said he, “ And behold I establish my covenant with YOU.” Not with THEE, to intimate that this covenant was made with them in a social capacity. Though Noah and his Sons were severally, or personally, interested in this transaction; yet he spake unto them jointly, as all made up one domestic church. Nor was it any way inconsistent with the sincerity of God to admit Ham as a covenanter; for God does not deal with persons, in the visible Church, by external administrations, according to what they are in the eye of his omniscience; but according to what they appear in the eye of his Church. He could easily make the church, visible and invisible, of the same extent; but he has seen meet to admit many into the former who have no place in the latter. Nor will the separation be perfect till the harvest of the end of the world.—This covenant was made with Noah and his Sons, not only for themselves, but also for their seed: Said God, “ I establish my covenant with you, and with your SEED after you.” That is, the generation then present covenanted for the succeeding one, it being a part of themselves. The divine promises then made, respected the ages to come.

come. It was a matter of great comfort to be thus secured of a seed, especially as their salvation depended on the SEED of the woman, which was now included in their own SEED. The seed chiefly intended in the promise, being the extraordinary seed of the woman; and both a natural and spiritual seed, as necessary for bringing him forth in the fulness of time. This specification of their seed taught them likewise, to instruct their children in the knowledge of this covenant, both in respect of the privileges and duties of it.—This covenant extended also to the brute creation. Because every living creature is mentioned, two conclusions have been deduced, which are equally false: First, They infer, that this transaction is not strictly federal; but a decree, or naked promise. But these men should have observed, that there may be a proper covenant, though it can only be said to be made with some of the parties specified, in an improper sense: This covenant was primarily, and properly, made with Noah and his Sons: It was only by consequence that it was made with the brute creation. It was made with the beasts of the earth, not absolutely for their sakes; but as they were designed for the benefit of man. So they were originally made for man's use, and destroyed by the flood for man's abuse of them; so their preservation for the future was intended as a benefit to man, both as they were to be used in sacrifices, and in supplying the

the necessaries of life. Secondly, Others acknowledge the transaction to be foederal, but deny that it respected spiritual privileges and duties; because made with the irrational as well as rational creation. But the seeming force of this argument is, in part, obviated by what is just now suggested: And the spiritual nature of this transaction will best appear from,

SECONDLY, The PARTS of it: And it consists in divine grants, on God's part; and stipulations, on the part of Noah and his Sons.—In surveying the promises, I shall attend—~~Unto~~ the matter of them.—Enquire what ~~reference~~ they bear unto former grants.—How ~~far~~ they are for our consolation and direction.

MOSES is explicit in registering these promises, both as revealed to Noah, and as conceived in the divine mind. In the latter view, says the inspired historian, “And Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: Neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.” In the former view, “And I will establish my covenant with you: Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a deluge: Neither shall there any more be a
* M flood

flood to destroy the earth." Both these securities were probably granted at the same time ; as they both refer unto the same privileges, the former being revealed, by the spirit of prophecy, to Noah, as a prophet ; and the latter by an articulate voice from the personal Word, who frequently appeared to, and conversed with the patriarchs : We shall, therefore, consider them together.

I. WE shall attend, in the first place, unto the Matter of these promises :

1. GOD promiseth not to curse the ground any more for man's sake. Expositors seem rather to have darkened this passage than elucidated it : Dr Gill imagines it contains a promise to remove the curse denounced on the ground immediately after the fall. He insinuates, that the world was rather the better of the flood ; and that the antediluvian world was a barren, and an accursed world, compared with the postdiluvian one. But the very reverse is certainly the truth in this case : For the earth brings forth briars and thorns as copiously since the flood, as it could do before ; and, as to many places at least, the flood must have rendered the earth less fertile, by washing off its soil, instead of improving it. The words of the Holy Ghost, when strictly rendered, are, " I will NOT ADD TO CURSE the ground any more for man's sake." The flood
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was an addition to the Adamic curse: This promise was a security against any such addition for the future; but it does not import a removal of that curse which was inflicted prior to the flood. This promise, then, is a limitation of divine sovereignty, in respect of punishment: For, though man would still deserve, yet God would not inflict it; seeing the sinner could never be mended thereby. Hence, the reason of the supreme judge, assigned by himself, is, "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." A strange, a God-like reason for averting the curse! The reason why God brought on the flood was, "because every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." This was sufficient to vindicate his justice and holiness: But now he designs to display the glory of his mercy; and the inveterate depravity of mankind afforded him a notable opportunity for that manifestation. As the stain of sin was, by far, too deep to be washed away by the waters of a flood, so God secured them against it.

2. God promised, "not to smite every living thing, any more, as he had done." The beasts suffered greatly, in the old world, for man's sin; being made for man, they were abused by him, and destroyed with him. This promise was a security to the life of the brute creation: And it was necessary for the service of God in that state of the Church; slain sa-

crifice being a part of his solemn worship. Their life must be spared from the ravage of a flood, that it may be offered to God, to make atonement for the soul, as well as for the conveniencies of men.

3. HE Covenants, that “all flesh shall not be cut off any more, by the waters of a flood: Neither shall there be any more a flood to destroy the earth.” The Church was but just recovered from the horrors of a flood of water, which figured out to her a still more dreadful flood of wrath. Now, this article of the Covenant being intended to comfort her against that terror, it cannot imply less than deliverance from the vengeance of Almighty God; and, of consequence, nothing less than a title to eternal life. As the flood figured out eternal wrath, so security from eternal wrath must include in it eternal life.

4. HE Covenants, “That, while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease*.” The sacred historian mentions this promise only as a purpose, indeed; or, what God said in his heart: But, from this particular promise, Jeremiah styles the whole transaction, “The covenant of the day, and the covenant of the night †.” From hence

* Gen. viii. 21, 22. † Jer. xxxiii. 20, and 25.

we may reasonably conclude, that it bore a part in the covenant. The revolutions of the year, and of the day, were greatly changed for the space of time that Noah was pent up in the ark; then the world wore the gloom of a long and wearisome night: But, by this promise, the Church is assured, that such a night shall never again sit down on the universe, till the glass of time be finished, and for ever run.

II. SHOULD it be enquired, What reference did these promises bear unto former divine grants? It may be answered, That they are a renovation and confirmation of them; as appears,——From the occasion on which they were given. God gave them unto Noah immediately after he had been employed in sacrificing unto him, as an evidence that his sacrifice was of a sweet-smelling savour unto the Lord. This sacrifice was the seal of a preceding promise, and offered in the faith of it. This occasion strongly insinuates, that this covenant was a prosecution of that promise. While Noah improved such a promise as the Church previously enjoyed, God was graciously pleased to confirm the word on which he had caused him to hope; and this is agreeable to his usual method of dealing with his people.——The Description of the Covenanters strongly insinuates, that this covenant was an advancement of a fabric already begun. There

There is a manifest resemblance between the description of persons specified in the promise, and the parties of this covenant. The former are styled **THY SEED**, meaning the seed of the woman; the latter **YOUR SEED**. The chief seed intended in both promises is the Messiah. By this covenant-name, the covenanters were bound to bear a part among the spiritual seed of the woman also (that is genuine saints, in opposition to the seed of the serpent. Hence, they were bound to prosecute the ends of that covenant which God made with Adam immediately after the fall; and this transaction was a prosecution of that grand design.—The Matter of this Covenant evidently contains a renovation of the former one; and their promises seem to be engrossed into it. Both this and the last transaction secured the Church from a deluge, though in different ways; in the former, God granted safety in danger; in the latter, exemption from that species of danger.—The Manner in which this deed was executed is evidently expressive of its relation to an antecedent transaction. Said the great author of it, “And I, behold I **ESTABLISH** my covenant with you.” He did not then first give being to this covenant; but confirmed that which was previously made*.

* See Part First.

III. IF it be enquired, How far these promises are for our direction and comfort? I shall only answer, We ought to compare them with the following revelations of God's will, which tend to illustrate them; and to receive, by faith, that spiritual salvation they exhibit in a figure. We ought to rejoice in that love and care which God expressed to the Church in her infant state; and rest assured, seeing he did so great things for her at that time, that he will encrease her ay more and more; he will do better things unto her than at her beginning. This transaction gives us the greatest encouragement to depend on our Heavenly Father; both as a God of promise, and as a God of providence. In the greatest

convulsions and emotions of this world, we may rest, with safety, on God's unchangeable covenant: "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed: but my loving kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy upon thee *."

THE DUTIES which Noah and his Sons restipulated are mentioned prior to the pro-

* If. liv. 9, 10.

mises, as spoken by God, though they could not be performed but in consequence of the accomplishment of them. The Jews and Jesuits have written copious trifles concerning the seven precepts of Noah, as they speak; but I shall not spend time either to recite or refute them. The duties required of these covenanters were, either such as the law of nature dictated, or such as they were bound to perform by virtue of revealed explications of that law; or, finally, such as belonged to the instituted worship of God.

1. THIS family was obliged to observe the Law of Nature. A rational creature cannot be without a law; much less a religious family. The Church had no other law, respecting morals, from the fall to the flood, so far as we know; yet Cain had a conscience of guilt when he violated that law, as is evident from his defences when sifted before the tribunal of God. Nor was there any thing done at, or before the flood, to dissolve that obligation.

2. NOAH was favoured with some explications of these moral precepts, from the mouth of God himself. That which is now the sixth precept, in the order of the Decalogue, was explained and fenced at this time: "And at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Who-
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so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed *." Conscience dictated to Cain, he deserved death, when there was no such revelation: for he said, "Whosoever findeth me shall slay me †." Now, God expressly enjoined what conscience always dictated. The duties required in the seventh precept of the decalogue are also, in part, enumerated in this transaction: As they had been to Adam, immediately after his creation. As Adam was the father of mankind, and possessor of the world; so Noah was the father of the new world, and appointed to people and possess it, in like manner. It was also proper to regulate the laws of marriage and propagation, as a testimony against that lasciviousness which ruined the old world. Though the sins opposite to these two precepts are not mentioned, yet they are tacitly CONDEMNED; while the opposite duties are enjoined: And this explication of the moral law was a proper vindication of the holiness of God and the honour of his law, which had been trampled under foot by the wantonness and violence of the antediluvian sinners.

3. NOAH received instructions relative to the instituted worship of God: "But flesh, with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat †." Numerous controversies have

* Gen. ix. 5, 6. † Gen. iv. 14. ‡ Gen. ix. 3, 4.

been agitated on this head: For example, it has been disputed, Whether animal food had been allowed to mankind before the flood; or, if this was the first grant of it, Whether God prohibited blood-eating altogether; or, if he only forbade the drawing of blood from live animals, and drinking it while warm; or, supposing the prohibition of blood, Whether he prohibited it on moral or ceremonial considerations? The generation of men called GLASSITES, in obedience to the nod of their leader, lay great stress on abstinence from blood, reckoning the eating of it a sin equally atrocious with that of eating the forbidden fruit. It deserves our observation, that there is no prohibition of blood, but during the time in which it was lawful to offer sacrifices: And the reason assigned by God himself is, "Because the blood maketh the atonement for the soul*." Nor can any reason be assigned, why it should be prohibited on a different account in the days of Noah, from that for which it was prohibited in the time of Moses. The reason of this law ceased when it became unlawful to shed the blood of beasts in sacrifice; and the law itself, it may be presumed, expired with it. The prohibition was proper, however, at this time, to elucidate the rite of sacrifice, and to direct the faith of the offerer forward to the blood of the great atonement.

* Levit. xvii. 11.

It taught him, That he had forefeited all that life which God beftowed on him; and, therefore, in fovereignty, he had appropriated to himfelf the blood, which was the life of the facrifice, inftead of taking the life of the finner.

THIRDLY, I fhall next confider the CONFIRMATIONS of this Covenant. It was ratified,

1. **By the oath of God**: This oath is not mentioned in the Mofaic hiftory, indeed; but it is exprefsly referred to by an infpired prophet: "For, as I have fworn, that the waters of Noah fhall no more go over the earth; fo have I fworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee *." The oath of God is greatly different from that of men: Men need to fwear, becaufe the truth of their naked affertion may be queftioned; but he is not a man that he fhould lie, or the fon of man that he fhould repent. His eternal veracity fetts him infinitely above even the fufpicion of every fpecies of falfehood. The oath of God, then, is an act of divine condefcenfion to the infirmities of men, to beget in them unfhaken faith, and abundant confolation. When men fwear, they appeal unto a fuperior being, who is able to difcern their fincerity, and to reward

* If. liv. 9.

it, on the one hand ; and to detect their hypocrisfy and chastise their perfidy, on the other. But, when God swears, he pledgeth his own being and perfections for the accomplishment of his word. His own being is sufficient to give being to his promise, as well as his threatening ; because he could swear by no greater, he swears by himself. Whatever perfection be particularly mentioned, his being is engaged ; for his being and perfections are himself. He can as soon cease to be, as suffer the accomplishment of his word not to be. The glory of his perfections must be for ever eclipsed, should he suffer one iota of his word to fail.

2. God confirmed this Covenant by his Bow:
 “ And God said, This is the token of the covenant, which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generation : I do set my bow in the cloud ; and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud : And I will remember my covenant ; which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh : and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud ; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature
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ture of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth *." The Spirit of God also alludes unto this sign, both in the Old and New Testament; and more than insinuates, that there is in it a representation of the blessings of the New Covenant.—

The rain-bow is the reflection of the sun-beams through the clouds: In like manner, the Sun of Righteousness has made the splendor of his glory break through all the black clouds of sufferings and wrath which were spread over his face. He makes bright clouds of the darkest dispensations of his providence. Says a pious author, "See how the frowning clouds now smile with the glorious colours of the rain-bow, the cheerful token of God's covenant.—Such is the glorious transformation of all our afflictions, by Jesus Christ, O ye heirs of righteousness †!" As the clouds of wrath spent all their force on the Sun of Righteousness; so his glory broke through them, and the splendor of it secures his people against every future deluge.—The horns of this bow are turned towards the earth, and the back of it towards heaven; nor are there any arrows in it, intimating, that, though it be a warlike instrument, yet it is not bent against man, neither has it any arrows in it to cut them

* Gen. ix. 12—17.

† M'Ewen on the Types.

off. Now God proclaims peace on earth, and good will towards men, instead of preparing the instruments of death for them, or placing his shafts against them.—He looks upon this bow as a memorial of his covenant: “I will look on it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant.” In like manner, he looks on the Redeemer, and remembers his promise to his people through him. Hence, the Church prays, “Behold, O God, our Shield; and look on the face of thine anointed*.” And she believes, that, for his sake, He will remember his Covenant†.

FOURTHLY, The OCCASIONS of this Transaction must be considered in the next place. It was made about an hundred and twenty years after the former covenant with Noah. And that space of time was filled up with very wonderful providences, both of mercy and judgment. These afforded occasions for this covenant. The occasions were,

1. SUCH as originated from the former federal transaction. The former covenant was a testimony against the sensuality and violence of the old world; and this was a prosecution of that testimony. Tho’ the sturdy rebels, who peopled the old world, were washed away by

* Psal. lxxxiv. 9.

† The Rev. Mr Ebenezer Erskine’s Sermon on Rev. iv. 3.

the flood; yet, the seeds of rebellion against God were far from being washed away from mankind. This covenant, then, was requisite, that the advantages gained by the former might not be totally lost: That the Church might not be split on that same rock which proved so fatal to the old world: That a testimony to the holiness of God, as directly contrary to their wicked measures, both in its nature and operations, might not be suffered to fall unto the ground. The former covenant was extremely proper in view of an approaching flood; but not quite so suitable unto the circumstances of those who were but just delivered from one: Wherefore, if the same design be carried on which had been advanced by the preceding transaction, covenant-renovation became highly expedient.

2. SUCH as originated in the care and love of God about his Church. The horrors of a flood were unspeakably great; and the dread of it might be ready to haunt, even the very persons who escaped it. But, that they might not be swallowed up with too much terror, he was pleased to afford them a fresh proof of his paternal regard, by taking them of new into covenant with himself. They might justly have dreaded, that their sins would draw down a second deluge, had not this covenant secured them against any such disaster. As the former covenant took rise from Noah's finding grace
in

in the eyes of the Lord; so this one origin in the same source. "And the Lord smelled sweet savour (viz. in the sacrifice of his Son prefigured by that of Noah): And the Lord said in his heart," &c. The acceptance of sacrifice was a clear proof that God was gracious; and this covenant a further evidence of his grace.

3. SUCH as took rise from the circumstances of the covenanters themselves. They had been with a special deliverance at God's hand; therefore, it was proper they should take this opportunity to testify their gratitude for the same. Covenanting is a grateful return for mercies received: Wherefore, great deliverances abroad for covenant-renovation. A simple repetition of former covenant-engagements could not fit their circumstances: The former covenant was adapted unto a suffering lot, while the Church was now in a prosperous condition. Thus, God has been pleased to display his goodness in fitting his revelation to that particular state of the Church on which it was bestowed; and to dispose and enable her to correspondent returns.

FIFTHLY, We may now subjoin a few REFLECTIONS on what has been observed.

1. WE may learn the absurdity of transferring the Noachic Covenant unto temporal things.

PART 2. DISSERTATION I. 105

It is readily granted, that it was among the darkest of a dark œconomy of grace; but it cannot from thence follow, that it was no gracious dispensation at all. As Noah's faith saw through a flood of water to a flood of wrath; so it saw deliverance from the latter, in deliverance from the former likeways. And what did he consider as the meritorious cause of this deliverance? What but the righteousness of faith? By this believing prospect he became an HEIR OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH. The true key to understand this dispensation is, to consider God's dealing with his people, even about common and ordinary things, as emblematical of things spiritual and eternal: And the Apostle observes, the eleventh of the Hebrews throughout, that these things were not only capable of a secondary sense; that is, a spiritual one; but that they had a spiritual, though emblematical sense put upon them, even in the Old Testament, and taken up by the faith of Old Testament saints; though the spiritual signification of these things is more copiously unfolded, and more minutely delineated under the new and better œconomy. There are many in our day who maintain, that Christ and his Apostles did allegorize upon the carnal things of the Old Testament; but that the Old Testament had no such meaning in itself, nor did the Old Testament saints take these things in this view. But the Apostle does not declare what way Christ and

and his Apostles explained the providential occurrences which befell the Old Testament saints—he only tells what the faith of these saints saw, and realized, in the glass of divine providence.

2. THE reward of grace inevitably follows the obedience of faith. If Noah is enabled to offer an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord God will manifest the sweetness of its favour in his nostrils, by renewing his covenant-promise to the sacrificer. Noah's deliverance constrained him to offer a thank-offering; that offering is accepted, and rewarded by the Lord as an evidence that the deliverance had been blessed to Noah, as well as suitably improved by him. Thus, the renewed manifestation of divine favour are frequently the reward of evangelical duties; and, whatever be their reward in this world, they shall, in the world to come, be over paid with life eternal.

3. THE Church of God is a mixed society in her militant state. However small, or pure she may be; yet there is always some of the old leaven latent in her. As there was a Judas among the Disciples; so there was a Ham among the sons of Noah in the ark. There will always be wolves in sheep's clothing,—tares among the wheat, till the harvest of the end of the world.

DISSERTATION II.

ON ABRAHAM'S COVENANT.

THE dispensations of grace towards the Church have been always gradual: God proceeds, in them, from that which is less unto that which is more perfect. This has, in a particular manner, been his way of dealing with Abraham. As the patriarch's family was an emblem of the Church; so the plan of divine conduct to it was a model of the whole plan of divine dispensations towards her. Inattention to the progress and advancement of God's promise has betrayed many, who have written concerning it, into great confusion. That we may avoid the rocks on which others have split, we shall proceed according to the covenants transacted with him, and assign a distinct part unto each of them.

P A R T I.

GEN. xi. 31, 32. Ch. xii. 1—3.

VARIOUS authors, when considering God's dispensations to Abraham, have distinguished between the promise and the covenant: They style the transaction recorded in the above cited verses **THE PROMISE**, and those recorded in some subsequent chapters, **THE COVENANT**: But both this and the following transactions are strictly foederal; the latter being expressly styled covenants by the sacred historian, as is this by Paul: "And this I say, that the **COVENANT** which was confirmed of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul*." Now, it is only to this transaction that the date specified can agree, as we shall afterwards make appear. And the name is properly expressive of its nature, as will be clear from shewing,—I. Who are the Parties Covenanting.—II. What are the Parts belonging to each of these Parties.—III. The solemn Confirmations of this Covenant.—And, IV. The Occasions of it.

FIRST, I must consider the **PARTIES** of this Covenant; namely, the Son of God and

* Gal. iii. 17.

Abram;

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Abram! An infinite disparity! Will God in very deed deign to covenant with man, who is but dust and ashes!

1. GOD is the author, and first proposer of this covenant. Stephen informs us, that it was the GOD OF GLORY who appeared unto the patriarch on this important occasion*. The phrase imports, not only his being possessed of all glorious perfections, but also some special manifestation of his glory: Perhaps some external splendid appearance; such as when the GLORY OF THE LORD filled the Tabernacle, or Temple†. A Three One God, reconciled in, and revealed by the Messiah, covenanted with Abram at this time; but it was only the Son who made the visible appearance, and spake with the audible voice. It has not been proved, as yet, that either the Father or the Holy Ghost ever assumed a visible shape under the shadowy dispensation: For no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. Jehovah the Son appeared, cloathed with all those divine perfections which beamed forth in former covenants, and made further discoveries of that grace which is laid up in store for the children of God. The manner in which he manifested himself evidenced at once the divinity of his person and his

* Acts vii. 2. † Dr GUYSE's Paraphrase on Acts vii. 2.

mission unto the mind of Abram, so as to beget in him a divine faith *. Hence, says the Apostle, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, obeyed †."

2. THE other Party in this Covenant is Abram, the son of Terah, the tenth generation from Noah. Some have maintained, that he was Terah's first-born; but, for reasons to be afterwards assigned, I judge he was his second, if not his third son. It has also been disputed, If he was an idolater prior to this call and covenant? The sacred historian leaves this question undetermined indeed; but Joshua puts the matter beyond all possibility of doubt: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood, in old time; even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other Gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood *." The Pelagians, both ancient and modern, imagine it inconsistent with the holiness of God, to call any into covenant with the Most High who have no good qualifications to recommend them to his favour, and much more so to admit an idolater. But all the supposed inconsistency would

* Zanch. de Tribus Elohim, p. 29. † Heb. xi. 8.

† Josh. xxiv. 2.

suddenly disappear, were not these men ignorant of the Scriptures and of the grace of God. Is it any way inconsistent with divine holiness to call men from sin unto grace? Can any sinner come out of his natural and sinful state till he be powerfully drawn by divine influences? The fact is, Abram is set up as a pattern of divine sovereignty towards them who are called in every age; for in him free grace was exalted, and human pride abased. "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn (said God to Israel), and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham, your father; and unto Sarah who bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him *." The Jews piqued themselves not a little on account of their ancestors; they frequently boasted, that they had Abraham to their father: But, said Jehovah, look back to the first years of this patriarch's life, and you will find he was far from having any thing which may afford you the least ground of gloriation: He was as deeply drenched in idolatry as any of his father's family; and sovereign grace alone singled him out from among them.—In his natural state, then, he was a vile idolater; in his gracious state, he was the friend of God, and father of the faithful: He was a pattern of faith and many other graces, indeed, notwithstanding his numerous infirmities

* IC. li. 2.

and manifold sins. More particularly, he sustained a two-fold character: First, he was a type of the Messiah promised to Adam and Noah, under the notion of an illustrious SEED. The Covenant of Grace was made from eternity with the Redeemer, as the representing head of his seed; and this covenant was made with the patriarch, as the representative of his seed in like manner: "Now, to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made (viz. the promises of this covenant); he saith not of SEEDS as of many, but as of one; and to thy SEED, which is Christ*." Again, he stood in the capacity of a Saint, a distinguished member of the Church, as then constituted; as well as an eminent example of the Church to the latest age.

* Gal. iii. 16.

The same doctrine was taught at the very dawn of the Reformation from Popery: Said Jerom Zanchius, "Nunc tenemus quæ sint fœderis capita. Ad primum vero caput, seu ad promissionem Dei quod attinet, notandum est, totam eam esse gratuitam, absolutum, et citra omnem conditionem. Ac proinde Deum illam in omnibus confœderatis ex sua misericordia ac bonitate implere." He adds, "Ac certum est, hunc fuisse Scopum Domini, in hac fœderis obligatione: qua sese obstrinxit Christo homini in persona Abrahami, et in eo omnibus electis, qui omnes simul cum Christo sunt ipsum, ut antedictum est, Semen Abrahæ: certum est, inquam, hunc fuisse Scopum Dei, ut scilicet animos nostros in fide, et omni Fiducia erga se confirmaret." De Nat. Dei, p. 401.

SECONDLY,

SECONDLY, We are next to enquire, What are the PARTS which belong unto each of these Parties respectively.

ON the PART of GOD are the following exceeding great and precious promises:

1. GOD promiseth to MAKE OF HIM AN EXCEEDING GREAT NATION*. This promise received its accomplishment, both in the literal and mystical sense, in agreeableness to the double capacity of the patriarch. At the time when this promise was made, there was little prospect of either the literal or mystical seed: But, beyond all human expectation, God has accomplished, and is accomplishing it still. In the former sense, the promise was accomplished, not only in the Ishmaelites and Arabians, the sons of Keturah, but also in the nation of Israel: When the promise was made, he had not so much as one son; but, when Israel came out of Egypt, they were not fewer than six hundred thousand men, besides women and children.—In the latter sense, the promise is still accomplishing, in the NATIONS OF THEM WHO ARE SAVED: This will be an exceeding great nation, indeed, whom no man can, or shall be able to number.

2. GOD promiseth TO BLESS HIM†. In the inspired writings, the word BLESS is some-

* Gen. xii. 2. † Ibid.

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times used in an inferior sense, indeed ; but here it must be taken in its most sublime and spiritual import : It denotes a free and full justification, with all the precious fruits which ensue upon it. So the Apostle explains it, " The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached the gospel before unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed ; so they which be of the faith are BLESSED with faithful Abraham *." This promise comprehends all other privileges, even the gift of the Holy Ghost, and eternal life : Justification, however, is chiefly intended, though those must not be excluded ; and it is fitly styled BLESSING, as it frees the sinner from the CURSE of the law, and entitles him to everlasting BLESSEDNESS in heaven.

3. GOD engageth to MAKE HIM A GREAT NAME †. A name, in Old Testament language,

* Gal. iii. 8. 9.—CAMPEG. VITRING. explains this phrase in the following terms: " Per BENEDICTIONEM
" intelligenda sit justitia Dei, gentibus in Christum cre-
" dentibus gratuito imputanda, et sola obtinenda fide,
" ad exemplum et in communione Abrahami, qui hoc
" beneficio, a Deo singulari gratia impetrato, in Histo-
" ria Sacra insignis fuisse tradatur, et amicus Dei appel-
" lari meruerit: quam *εὐλογία* comitaretur ἡ *εὐλογία* τοῦ
" πνεύματος, sive dona Spiritus S. aliaque beneficia gratiæ
" olim promissa, virtute justitiæ Christi in Ecclesiam con-
" ferenda." Ob. Sac. Lib. 5.

† Gen. xii. 2.

imports

imports FAME; especially such as is perpetuated by the offspring, or representative of persons or families. The original phrase is, I will MAGNIFY THY NAME; that is, I will raise and maintain thy renown, not only among the Jewish nation, but also among the Gentiles, in gospel days. The name of Abraham was peculiarly aggrandized when God himself pronounced him THE FATHER OF THEM WHO BELIEVE: And it is still magnified by such as are brought into his spiritual family.

4. GOD said to Abram, "THOU SHALT BE A BLESSING *." Some expositors view this promise as an amplification of the second specified, and explain it thus, Thou shalt be blessing itself; that is, abundantly blessed. But this exposition can by no means comport with the emphasis of the inspired original: The sacred text, when strictly rendered, is, BE THOU A BLESSING. This is the strongest manner of expressing predictions. To give them out by way of command, says, that he who announceth them is also able to command their performance. When the infinite Jehovah said unto Abram, BE THOU A BLESSING, it could not imply less than an appointment of him to that effect. But still it has been disputed, Whether he was constituted a BLESSING in his

* Gen. xii. 2.

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own person or in his seed *. I apprehend both senses may be included, though the latter is chiefly intended: Abram was constituted BLESSING, as he was set apart to be the channel through which the SEED OF THE WOMAN and of Noah, should come: being, at once the type and one of the ancestors of the Messiah, as well as Noah. He was not only a blessing in respect of his usefulness in his own day and generation, but also as a figure of the Messiah: Accordingly, that which is affirmed of the type, in this promise, is affirmed of the antitype, in a later prophecy †. In this promise, the Messiah was exhibited in the person and under the figure of Abram, to be blessings, especially justification to sinners and the curse: "And men shall be blessed in him

5. GOD promised to BLESS THEM WHO BLESSED ABRAM ‡. Those who blessed him were such as wished well to his soul, and the souls of all who walk in his footsteps.—Such as wished well to the kingdom and interest of the Messiah; and also ascribed blessing and praise unto the Messiah himself. God engageth to bring such persons in, along with Abram, to share of pardon and reconciliation; yea, the blessing the Messiah is an evidence he has

* Dr Gill confines this promise to the former signification, and Dr Owen to the latter.

† Gen. xii. 18.

‡ Gen. xii. 3.

pardon

pardoned them already, and that he will bless and increase them ay more and more, till he bring them to glory.

6. GOD promised to CURSE THEM WHO CURSED ABRAM. The sense which is usually given to this verse is to the following purport: That God has common friends and common foes with his people. And this is certainly true in itself, though not the truth here revealed: This promise refers to the enemies of the Messiah and his seed, as these are united under the old serpent. Said God, "I will CURSE HIM that speaketh evil of thee." The persons blessed are expressed in the plural number, and the objects of the curse in the singular. The reason of this change, say some, is, because there are many to speak well of Abram and his seed, compared with those who speak evil of them. But the very reverse, I humbly judge, is the truth in this case, while that seed are in this world: The world is their step-mother, and speaks all manner of evil concerning them. The reason why God speaks of the object of the curse as one individual person is, because all the cursed race are actuated by one and the same spirit, and united under one head. The old serpent then, and all his brood, are an accursed race; The curse which God pronounceth on this man is expressed by another term

* Gen. xii. 3.

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than that which expresseth that curse which Abram's enemies pronounce on him *. The latter signifies to speak lightly of a person, as well as to curse. Accordingly, the serpent and his seed vend their malice against the genuine sons of Abram, by obloquy and reproach, when

* The curse with God denounced against the haters of Abram and his seed is expressed by מָאָר, from מָאָר maledixit, execratus est; which is used to denote the heaviest curses mentioned in all the book of God: Such as the curse pronounced on Cain, Gen. iv. 11. On Ham and Canaan, Gen. ix. 25. And those from mount Ebal, Deut. xxvii. 15. usque ad finem. This last is a representation of the curse of the Covenant of Works; that curse under which the seed of the serpent, from among men, will be found at the last day; when the righteous judge shall say unto them, depart from me ye CURSED! Than which no one thing can be more dreadful; as God can easily put all his wishes into execution, and perform all that he has threatened.—The curse which Abram's enemies wish on him is expressed by קָלִיל, from קָל, which imports SMALL WEIGHT, when applied to physical subjects, and LITTLE HONOUR when applied to morals. In the former sense it is used, Gen. viii. 11.: So Noah knew that the waters were abated (Heb. were lighter on) from off the earth. In the latter sense it occurs more frequently in the Old Testament; and is variously rendered by our translators: Sometimes it is translated DESPISE, as Gen. xvi. 4, 5. when Hagar despised, or lightly-esteemed her mistress. At other times it is rendered CURSE, as 2 Sam. xvi. 5, 7, 10. and xix. 21. when Shimei cursed David; that is vilified and reproached him. In this last signification it obtains in the text under consideration. The seed of the serpent nibble at the heel of the Seed of the Woman after the example of Shimei; or, in imitation of the ACCUSER of the brethren. See Dr Owen on the Heb. Exerc. Vol. I. p. 90.

restrained

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restrained from manual persecution: they vilify them with their tongues, drawing them like sharp swords, when their circumstances cannot admit of more.—The former denotes, a devoting to direful torments, whether temporal or eternal. Thus, it was used by God himself, when he doomed the devil, under the notion of a serpent, unto eternal punishment*. This promise denounceth eternal wrath upon all who continue to act like their father the devil unto the end: Verily they shall have their reward! Taken in this light, then, it is a notable renovation of the first promise; and a farther prosecution of that grand design: For threatenings against the devil and his children, are promises to the Woman and her seed. Of consequence, as the first promise was engrossed in this covenant, it cannot imply less than covenant-renovation.

7. GOD said unto Abram, AND IN THEE SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED†. This promise is certainly an amplification of the fourth, which has been considered above; and it is frequently renewed in after covenants. It imports, that a part of all the kindreds of the earth should be justified and saved through the seed of Abram: For to BLESS has been explained, by the Apostle, to JUSTIFY; and whom God justifies,

* Gen. iii. 14.

† Gen. xii. 3.

them he also glorifies. The emphasis of the promise lies on the preposition *IN* *. Justification, and all those blessings which are connected with it, are promised *IN* Abram,—As the grand exemplar to the Church, even in gospel-times: Said the Apostle Peter, “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And *IN* thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed †.” This promise was a ground of faith, not only to Abram, a single father, but also to all the fathers of the Old Testament Church, this covenant being made with the fathers: Not only to the members of the Old Testament, but also to such as lived after the resurrection of Christ, when the Gospel Church was constitu-

* “Particula *in* (*IN*) triplicem in hac promissione significatum obtinet: BENEDICENTUR *IN* TE. 1. ut in exemplari. Abraham, quippe ex fide justificatus et benedictus exemplar ac typus fuit benedictionis ac justificationis gentium ex fide. Hinc Petrus Act. III. 25.—2. ut in Patre. Sic Deus dicit ad Abrahamum: *In* Isacco vocabitur semen tuum. Perinde ac si diceret, vocando semen et filios Isaco, semen tuum vocabo.—3. ut in causa. Benedicentur *IN* te, hoc est, semine tuo, nempe Christo, omnis benedictionis fonte. Hunc sensum reddit Paulus Gal. III. 16.” Heidegger Histor. Patriarch. Tom. II. Exercit. 3. Thef. 8.—“Nam in Abrahamo omnes familie terre benedicentur. 1. Quia in ipso continebatur Messias in quo est omnis benedictio. 2. Quia Dux et Princeps fœderis Dei, et fœcutoris fidei atque benedictionis Exemplar.” Wits. Oecon. Fœd. Lib. IV. Cap. iii. Thef. 14.

† Acts iii. 25.

ted,

ted. They came in along with him, on the same foundation; he as a father, and they as children.—Justification is also promised IN Abram, as the type of the Messiah, and the channel through which he should come into the world; he being one of his ancestors. Hence the words, IN THEE, are explained, in an after transaction, by IN THY SEED *. Now, the seed chiefly intended was Christ †.

On the PART of ABRAM, he bound himself,

1. To “get out of his own country †.” There is little room to doubt but the country, at first instance intended, was Ur of the Chaldees. Some have imagined, indeed, it was Haran; but on what foundation I know not. Stephen’s exposition is certainly infallible: Said he, “The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran §.” Ur is with much greater propriety styled the country of Abram than Charan; as he was born, brought up, and dwelt in it till he was more than seventy-four years of age: Whereas he only sat down before Charan for a few months. The duty commanded was necessary at this time, as his native country was a land of idolatry

* Gen. xxii. 18. † Gal. iii. 16.

‡ Gen. xii. 1. § Acts vii. 2, 3, 4.

and wickedness; and God deemed it unsafe for his Church to dwell among such neighbours; lest she should learn their ways, on the one hand; or be persecuted by them, on the other. It was also proper, that the condition of Abram might be a representation of the condition of God's children in this world. Like as he left his native country, and became a pilgrim on the earth; so must they leave this world, as a portion, and journey to the better country. And his faith looked through the type to the substance: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God *." Though New Testament believers are not always bound to leave their native country literally: Yet one reflection naturally occurs from the consideration of Abram's conduct; namely, When persons cannot accomplish the duties incumbent on them in their present situation, then they have a just call in providence to change it, and to embrace the first opportunity which lawfully offers for that purpose: For example,

* Heb. xi. 8, 9, 10.

if servants are in such bondage as deprives them of time to perform the duties of religion, whether public, private, or secret, they have just reasons for changing masters, so soon as they lawfully may: If persons dwellings are so remote from public ordinances as to render their attendance infrequent, they have a proper call to change their habitations: And, in so doing, they will either have their losses (unto which they may be brought by keeping the line of duty) made up to them, by the special interposition of heaven; or, if they are not, they will be sanctified to them for their good. No one ever lost at God's hand.

2. HE was enjoined to "get him out from his own kindred *." A man's heart naturally glows towards his country, and still more towards his kindred. These make that precious and pleasant to him. Yet, dear as these relatives were to the patriarch, he must forego the comfort he expected in them, and seek more sublime enjoyments in God himself. Society with idolaters is far from equalling fellowship with the living God: Therefore, Abraham wisely relinquished the former, and pursued the latter. The ties of nature yield to ties of grace.

3. HE is commanded to "get out from his father's house †." From hence some conclude,

* Gen. xii. 1. † Ibid.

that this command could not be given when he came from Ur; for then he brought his father along with him, but here he is bid come out from the house of his father. But the phrase, I apprehend, means Nahor and his family. Nahor was probably Terah's first-born; and the representative of his house: A leaving of Nahor, then, and the rest of his connections, might, with propriety enough, be styled a LEAVING OF HIS FATHER'S HOUSE; even although Terah came along with Abram, and took the lead in their peregrinations. The case seems to stand thus, The God of Glory appeared to Abram in Ur, and called him to depart from it; which call he at once believed and imparted to his father, who seems to have also believed it; being converted by it, and persuaded to obey it: But, as he fell sick, and died at Haran, on the way between Ur and Canaan, Abram was retarded in his journey for about the space of six months. And, after he had buried him, he went on his way. Dr Owen, an author to whom I am frequently, and unspeakably obliged, takes another method of accounting for this matter, to the following purpose: "What was the design of Terah, in his attempt to go for the land of Canaan, is not absolutely certain. The especial call of Abram unto that country could not be the bottom of it: For it is most probable, yea, indeed, undeniable, that this he had not until after the death of Terah. It was, therefore,

fore, an act of theirs, in answer to the providence of God, in a subserviency to that future call, that he might be in more readiness to yield obedience unto it than he could have been in the land of Ur. It is noticeable, that Terah died in Haran." The Dr. would carry Abram's call down after the death of Terah; that is, after the patriarch dwelt in Haran. But, says Stephen, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham WHEN he was in Mesopotamia, BEFORE he dwelt in Charran; and said unto him, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I will shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran. And from THENCE, when his father was dead, he removed him into the land where ye now dwell *." The call to leave his father's house is explained, by Stephen, by LEAVING HIS KINDRED. Nor can any thing be more evident, than that the proto-martyr placed this appearance and call before Abram's sojourning in Charran; and, of consequence, before the death of Terah.—Others imagine there was a double call given to Abram; one, mentioned by Stephen, while the patriarch was yet in Ur; the other, recorded by Moses, when he was in Haran: And that there were not fewer than five years distance between them. This opinion has many favourers, but a very slender foun-

* Acts vii. 2, 3, 4.

dition. The matter of the call recorded by Moses, and that by Stephen, is expressly the same: Nor have we any reason to suppose Abram so backward in complying with the divine admonition, as to put it off for five years after the intimation of it to him; especially, while his readiness in faith and obedience is recommended, by the Apostle, as a pattern to the Church in every succeeding period*.

4. HE is required to “go into a land that God would shew him†.” This land is not specified; but he must put a blank into the hand of his divine leader, and implicitly follow whithersoever he conducts him. As the father of the faithful must forget his father’s house, and his own people; so he was bound to cast himself entirely on the sovereign will of God, to make up all those things which he relinquished for his name’s sake. The event proved, however, that Canaan was the land intended. In this article of duty the patriarch set a special example to all who enjoy the gospel, to set out under the guidance of Leader and Commander of the people, LEAVING THEIR FATHER’S HOUSE, AND THEIR OWN PEOPLE: That is, the Covenant Works, the house of the first Adam; journey to the heavenly country, which Lord has promised.

* Heb. xi. 8. † Gen. xii. 1.

THIRDLY, The next branch of this subject is, to consider the **CONFIRMATIONS** of this Covenant. Says Paul, "The covenant that was **BEFORE CONFIRMED** of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul*." Divines are not a little divided, both as to the nature and date of this covenant-confirmation; and not a few have mistaken both. It is usually alledged, that this covenant was made four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the Law; but that it was not ratified till various after-occasions, much nearer that transaction. Hence they understand the confirmation intended by the Apostle, to be the oath of God,

* Gal. iii. 17.—The original word is *προστυπωμένη*. Arias Montanus renders it **ANTE AUTHENTICATUM**; Erasmus, Calvin, and Bullenger, **ANTE COMPROBATUM**; F. Gomarus, **PRIUS RATUM factum**; Beza, **PRIUS SANCITAM** (*Pactum sciz.*) Pareus **ANTE SANCITAM**; Leusden, **ANTE AUCTORITATE CONFIRMATUM**; Stockius, **ANTE RATUM HABITUM**. Such is the variety of expression: The sense is much the same; but the original phrase requires a circumlocution to convey its meaning. It imports, such ratification as rendered the covenant pleadable at the bar of Law and Justice; as well as irreversible by any after deed. Beza observes, the simple verb signifies, "Id, cui nihil desit quod ad fidem ipsi habendum requiratur." As to this compound verb he adds, "Vulg. omisit prepositionem *προ* magno errore cum in eo lateat vis argumenti sumpti temporis serie, &c. Et magnum habet pondus sancitum potius quam sancitum: quoniam jam tum Deus illud Pactum ratum fecerat in Christo, quamvis in Christum venturum respiceret, nedum ut legale fœdus adjecerit quo prius abrogaretur."

and

and the sacrament of Circumcision, &c. the fact is, the confirmation of this covenant as well as the covenant itself, is affirmed to have been four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the Law. The hinge of the Apostle's argument turns upon this thing; the FORE-CONFIRMATION of this covenant being opposed to the DISANNULLING IT; and not the making of it, absolutely considered. And this confirmation is four hundred and thirty years prior to the giving of the Law; whereas the sacrament of Circumcision, and the oath specified, were not so distant from it*: Wherefore, we must look for other confirmations than those above mentioned. And the covenant was confirmed at this time,

1. As God, for Christ's sake, delineated and engraved the promises of it, on Abram's heart by the Holy Ghost: He evidenced the truth and certainty of the promise to him, so that he was persuaded of it, and embraced it; at the same time, he was MOULDED INTO the FORM of the promise which he had embraced. And this is one of the ways in which GOD CONFIRMETH, to his servants, the word of promise which he hath caused them to hope.

2. THIS covenant was ratified by the appearances of the Son of God, and the

* CLOP. De Fœdere Dei, Disput. viii. Thes. 7.

which he paid to Abram. This covenant secured the patriarch of an extraordinary seed, as we have seen. These appearances were nothing else than so many pledges and preludes of that comprehensive blessing. The Son appeared, even that same person who took hold of the seed of Abram in the fulness of time: And this he did, to shew how much he delighted in that humanity which he afterwards designed to assume; as well as to assure the persons, to whom he appeared, of that grand event in the fulness of time.—Abram, the friend of God, had many visits of this kind: Some enumerate not fewer than eight; and, of these eight, two belong unto this covenant: The one in Ur of the Chaldees, at the making of it; the other at Shechem, the same year in which it was made. Such was the Redeemer's condescension to the father of the faithful! Such his love to humanity, that he frequently tried on that robe prior to the fulness of time! By these appearances the patriarch's faith could not but be greatly confirmed, not only as the latter visit assured him, that the former was not diabolical illusion, nor yet the effects of a heated imagination; but also, as it afforded him a certain prospect of the day of Christ, though afar off. He longed vehemently to see it, and he saw it and was glad.

3. THIS covenant was confirmed by Sacrifice *. Accordingly, Abram built an altar in the plain of Moreh, and another on a mountain between Bethel and Hai. True it is, indeed, we are not informed as to the kind of sacrifices which were offered: But an altar bespeaks a relation to a sacrifice; and sacrifice was originally appointed to be a seal of the promise.

FOURTHLY, The next thing to be considered, is the OCCASIONS of this Transaction.

1. IT obtained about the middle space of time between the creation of the world and

* "Theologicum hoc est, et hujus loci, quod recte IAC. CAPPELLUS asserit, "quamvis ante illam historiam, Gen. xv. 18. Fœderis vocem non habemus, tamen rem habemus, Fœdus plenissimum atque adeo Evangelicum." Certe si Fœderis vocem expressam ita flagites, "ut ubi illa non existat, nulla intelligenda sit facta Fœderis conventio et sanctio, relabimur in Judaicum illud inane מִלְכָּה: ut scilicet nullum fuerit ante Diluvium Dei cum Ecclesia Fœdus promissionum," &c. — "Enimvero, (quamvis non expressâ voce Fœderis) ex illâ periphrasi Sacrificantium ex Fide, quam habemus, Psal. l. 5. כִּרְתִּי בְרִית עִלֵּי זֶבַח, qui pangunt fœdus meum super sacrificium, evincimus expressum esse sufficienter, sanctionis seu *συνέσις τῆς Διαθήκης* mentionem, ubicunque sacrificiorum mentio expressa est. Habemus autem iteratam jam ante mentionem sacrificiorum Abrahami. Bis quidem Gen. xii. nam primum vers. 7. atque iterum vers. 8. narratur ab Abrahamo ad sacrificiorum cultum exstructum Altare." CLOR. De Fœdere Dei, Disp. viii. Thef. 9 and 10.

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the incarnation of Christ, being near, though not exactly two thousand years distant from each of these extremes. It was also made about the middle space between the flood and the redemption of Israel out of Egypt: And it was something more than four hundred and twenty years distant from each of these events; being four hundred and twenty-seven years after the flood, and four hundred and twenty-six years since the last time we read of the Church's covenanting with God. The last covenant was executed the year after the flood: From the flood to the birth of Nahor, in the seventieth year of Terah's life, were two hundred and ninety-two years: From the birth of Nahor to that of Abram sixty years: And from Abram's birth to his call about seventy-four years *.

2. THE

* I know some eminent divines express a most sovereign contempt of all chronological disquisitions. I confess I am otherways minded; as chronology serves to manifest the divine veracity by removing various seeming contradictions in the Scriptures; as well as illustrate divine wisdom in providential dispensations, shewing that every thing takes place in the season fittest for his people's necessities, and most for the honour of the Divine Governor. Various able chronologers have proceeded on a different plan, in settling the era of this covenant: They suppose Abram was Terah's first-born; and, of consequence, place this transaction sixty years at least nearer the flood than I have done. Such as Augustine, Luther, Scaliger, Alsted, Christopher Helvicus, Giles Stranchius, Seth Calvisius; and, to mention no more, Messrs Robert Baillie and Robert Millar, two learned Scotsmen. But, in submission to competent judges, and

2. THE apostacy which had broke into the Church, from the flood till this time, rendered such a transaction absolutely necessary.— There were notable and glaring defections among those very persons whom God had taken into covenant with himself. Noah, the most eminent covenanter, had acted a partly unworthy his privileges and engagements by falling into the sin of drunkenness; and this notorious fault of Noah's, afforded scope for Ham's wicked heart to vent itself in a petulant publication of it to his brethren. Shem's con-

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with humble deference to such venerable names, the seventieth and fifth year of Abram's life coincided with the two hundred and fifth year of the life of Terah: Of consequence, Abram could not be his first-born, nor born in the seventieth year of his life. That the last year of Terah's life was his two hundred and fifth, is expressly asserted by Moses (Gen. xi. 32.) That Abram departed from Charran when his father died is equally certain on the authority of Stephen (Acts vii. 4.) And that Abram was only seventy-five years old when he left Charran is manifest from the testimony of the sacred historian, formerly quoted, (Gen. xii. 4.)—Now, if we take seventy-five years from the two hundred and five that Terah lived, the remainder gives us the year of his life in which Abram was born, viz. the hundred and thirtieth year of it. - On this plan the two Testaments accord and every seeming contradiction is removed: Nor is it without the suffrage of the best critics (if human authority be of any consideration in this case), both ancient and modern: Such as Chrysostom, John Calvin, Francis Junius, Peter Martyr, Wolfgangus Musculus, David Pareus, Michael Walthers, John Diodati, Andrew Rivet, and Archbishop Usher; also our learned countryman

Scharj

duct, however, and Japhet's, is as full of filial reverence, as was Ham's of wantonness and wickedness; and both the former are as much commended by the Spirit of God as the latter is accursed. Noah, enlightened as a prophet, and empowered as a patriarch, pronounced this censure;—a censure which extended unto Canaan, as well as unto Ham: "Curfed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren *." As Ham was an undutiful son, so was he punished in his son, and the punishment carried on from generation to generation. Nor was this sentence, in any respect, unequal; as it is always just to visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, while the children walk in their father's foot-steps, and cleave to their iniquities. This was probably

Scharp (whom King James VI. banished) in his *SYMPHONIA PROPHETARUM ET APOSTOLORUM*, p. 52. And his opinion has been confirmed by the labours of John Henry Heidegger, and F. Spanheim, F. F. beyond any probability of refutation or reply. *Histor. Patriarch*, Tom. II. Exercit. xxiv. Thef. 12. et sequent. *Chronolog. Sac.* p. 226.—The only thing urged against the plan I have laid down is, the Mosaic account of Terah, Gen. xi. 26. "And Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." They imagine this proves Abram to have been born in the seventieth year of Terah; but, if it proves him to have been born that year, it proves Nahor and Haran to have been born the same year likewise, which is absurd. And, though Abram be first mentioned, it may justly import priority in point of dignity, rather than of years; as is frequently the case in the holy Scriptures.

* Gen. ix. 25.

the case with Canaan; the little wretch joined, in the derision of Noah, with his lascivious father. But reproof sits always uneasy on the neck of unrenowned sinners: Hence Ham and his family seem to have taken the same route with Cain, when this sentence was intimated to them; like him, they went out from the presence of the Lord.—The greatest part of mankind had joined in wicked device to build the Tower of Babel. Some might be ready to imagine, perhaps, that this was a very harmless amusement; but it contained a complication of evils. The device itself originated in pride, vanity, and atheism; and implied a distrust of God's covenant for their preservation. They designed to raise this Tower to heaven; as if they meant to rival God in the heavens: And, in the stateliness of it, they trusted for safety from a second deluge, rather than in the promise of the Noahic covenant. Some have denied, indeed, that this Tower was intended as a defence from second deluge; for (say they) it was built on a plain, and not on a hill, whereas a tower would have been a more advantageous situation for such a purpose: But, as they meant to raise it up to heaven, it was certainly all the same whether the foot of it stood on a plain or hill. To me it appears, that these builders did not think God's covenant a sufficient security; but imagined a tower of their own building greatly preferable. It is :

natural for man, in his corrupted state, to prefer his own devices to the inventions of infinite wisdom. These builders, like the antediluvian giants, meant to become MEN OF RENOWN: They said, "Let us make us A NAME*." Their wicked intention will appear in a still clearer point of view, if it is considered, that they intended to baffle the purpose of heaven in their punishment. Their own consciences dictated to them, that they were egregious sinners, and deserved to be scattered abroad; but they fell on this expedient, least "they should be scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth †."—By this time the world was almost universally sunk into idolatry. At the confusion of languages, which was inflicted by God to stop the Babel-building, the language which had before obtained in the world, as well as the true religion, continued in the family of Heber: Whereas the builders seem to have lost their religion with their language, if not before. But, by this time, idolatry had got in among the lineal descendents of Heber themselves, as well as others: Says Joshua, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods." Thus, the fire of idolatry was brought into the sanctuary of the Lord: Wherefore it was necessary to bring the Church out

* Gen. xi. 4. † Ibid.

from thence, lest she should be consumed the flame. This covenant, then, was required at this time, to preserve the knowledge of true God in the world, as well as to be a testimony against these manifest covenant-violations.

3. NOAH, the preacher of righteousness, principal covenanter in the preceding transaction, was now dead; and there were few religious persons left behind to supply place. The most remarkable among them were Shem and Melchisedec; and Heber, probably, was still alive likewise: But, lest true religion should die with these persons, this covenant was necessary to raise up a covenanted seed, That the Covenant between God and his Church might ever be perpetuated. Thus God renewed the covenant with Noah's seed, in their generations, which he had struck with him in his own person; he continued to be the LORD GOD OF SEED AND HIS SEED, from generation to generation*.

* Gen. ix. 26. 27.

P A R T II.

G E N. XV.

AS it is better to adapt method to the subject, than to repeat what has been already advanced, I shall rather refer the reader to the preceding part than again insert the character of the Parties covenanting in this one. Here I shall proceed,—I. To consider the Declarations which God made unto Abram.—II. The Occasions of them.—And, III. Their Confirmations.

FIRST, I shall consider the gracious DECLARATIONS which God made unto Abram.

I. GOD promised to be Abram's SHIELD. He had lately broken the shield of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; but he secured Abram against any such disaster: Said he, "I am thy SHIELD." In all parts of the spiritual warfare, and in all the steps of thy peregrinations, my perfections are over thee as a covert, and round about thee as walls of protection. This promise is nobly illustrated by David: "He shall cover thee with his feathers; and under his wings shalt thou trust: his Truth shall be thy shield and thy buckler *." What grand

* Psal. xci. 4.

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encouragement had he to engage every my, at God's command, under this arm. It is sufficiently large to ward off every ger; absolutely impenetrable by all the darts of the devil.

2. GOD announced himself to Abram EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD *. Abram generously despised the reward offered by the king of Sodom; but God promised to confer on him a better and more durable substance. He promised to endue him with interest in all the perfections of the Deity, portion; and also in all the persons of Godhead. This REWARD must be gratefully received; yea EXCEEDING GREAT, transcends the most enlarged desires and expectations of the immortal soul; and it is as durable as the lasting ages of eternity.

3. GOD renewed unto him the PROMISE OF A SEED, which had been made in the old covenant, as well as unto Eve and Adam. God promised to make him a great number of children, while, as yet, he had not a single son. The triarch, therefore, manifested some fretfulness mixed with unbelief, in his reply; but God did not deny him an heir of his own body on any account. Though the accomplishment of the promise was delayed, as a chastisement

* Gen. xv. 1.

haps, of his unseasonable hesitation. Said Abram, "Lord, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." But God said, "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: And he said unto him, So shall thy Seed be *."

The faith of the patriarch, from first to last, was much exercised about this promise: And much depended on the accomplishment of it. Wherefore, God saw meet to unveil it gradually unto him: And it made one advance in this transaction, as he was secured of a seed without adoption. But, as it deserves to be minutely surveyed on all sides, I may observe,—That it includes a multitude of literal seed. This part of the promise received its accomplishment, especially, in the seed of Jacob: The sacred historian remarks, that they were as the SAND OF THE SEA. They were separated from the rest of the world, that this might be manifested; as well as for another, and still more important purpose.—That this promise also includes an Extraordinary Seed, even the true Messiah. The literal Seed

* Gen. xv. 2—5.

were, at first, separated, and afterwards knit together in a body, to be the channel through which this Extraordinary Seed should flow. And the patriarch's faith took up with the Messiah, even in this edition of the promise as appears from the object of it: "He believed the Lord, and it was accounted unto him as righteousness *." "He believed the promise that he should have a Seed, and a very numerous one; he believed the Messiah should spring from this seed; he believed in him as Saviour and Redeemer; he believed in him for righteousness; and he believed in his righteousness justifying him before God †."—This promise also includes a Spiritual Seed,—a race of believers, who should walk in the footsteps of faithful Abram: "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham ‡." The Apostle further witnesseth, "That he is the father of all them who believe,—that righteousness may be imputed to them also. And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the footsteps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised §." The promise is already fully accomplished with respect to the two first species of seed; as it respected a certain end which is now accomplished

* Gen. xv. 6. † Dr Gill in Loc.

‡ Gal. iii. 7. § Rom. iv. 11, 12.

With regard unto the last, it will receive a gradual accomplishment while the sun endureth.

4. GOD promised DELIVERANCE unto his seed from that Egyptian bondage, which was then foretold; and from the pilgrimage in which Abram was then engaged: "Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be strangers in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge: and afterwards shall they come out with great substance*." To state the matter of this promise in a clear point of view, it may be observed, That the four hundred years commenced with the affliction of Abram's seed in the person of Isaac: For, in the fifth year of his life, he was mocked; or, as the Apostle terms it, persecuted by Ishmael. This declaration does not say that they should serve four hundred years; but that they should be afflicted, and serve, and be strangers; for that space of time. Some part of the time they were strangers, as in the life of Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph: Some times they served without great affliction, as when Jacob served for a wife: Some part of the time they were afflicted without service, as Isaac by Ishmael, and Jacob by Esau: And, lastly, they both

* Gen. xv. 13. 14.

served and were afflicted, as when under the Egyptian task-masters. The four hundred years specified terminated in their deliverance from Egypt. The particulars which constitute that sum will be ascertained when we consider the occasions of the Sinai Covenant. The promise itself tended greatly to try Abram's faith, on the one hand; and to encourage him in his peregrinations, on the other. Though his seed should be greatly afflicted; yet they should also be graciously delivered in due time. This deliverance must also be considered as an eminent type of salvation to genuine Israelites, from worse than Egyptian bondage, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. God covenanted to bestow the land of Canaan on this covenanted seed. "The same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates*." Here I may observe, that

* Gen. xv. 18.—The land of Canaan is bounded, on the north, by mount Lebanon; on the south, by the wilderness of Paran, Idumea, and Egypt; on the east, by the mountains of Arabia; and on the west, by the GREAT SEA, or the Mediterranean. These were the limits of it till the reign of David, who extended it to the river Euphrates on the east. The possession was enlarged as the people increased. It is only as it stood in the days of David, that it agrees to the promise here made to the patriarch. The length of this land, from south

that this covenant included the promises above specified, as well as the promise of the land of Canaan. The original text, as Calvin well observes, shews that the covenant is of this extent: For it runs thus, "The same day, the Lord cut a covenant with Abram." Now, the CUTTING meant is the CUTTING of the sacrifices in twain, for ratifying the foregoing promises. This deserves the more particular consideration, as not a few confine the Abrahamic covenant unto the earthly Canaan. But, in this view, spiritual blessings were of the first and greatest consideration in it; while temporal blessings were only appendages of it, or typical glasses subjoined to it.—Again, I may add, That this promise was requisite, as a means of accomplishing others in this covenant. It was a means of accomplishing that promise, in particular, which respected the Messiah: For, if he were to spring from Abram, it was requisite that the seed of Abram should be kept together in a body, that they might be known; and in a separate state (lest they should be confounded with the rest of mankind) until that end was accomplished. Had they not been in a fixed habitation, apart

south to north, is near seventy leagues; that is, from Dan to Beer-sheba: The breadth, from the Mediterranean Sea to its eastern borders, scarce thirty. But the breadth of it, from the river of Egypt, or Sichor, on the south-west part, to the river Euphrates, on the north-east part, is much greater. Reland. Palestin. cap. iii. &c.

from

from the nations of the earth, they could not have been in a condition to receive those ordinances which served, at once, as a partition wall, to distinguish them from their neighbours, and as a glass to bring the Messiah in to their view.—Finally, I shall observe, that this inheritance was a figure of the heavenly inheritance. As Canaan was the place of rest after a wilderness journey, so is heaven to the weary traveller: After he has finished his course he enters into his rest. Nor were there any reason for conferring it on Israel, besides God's good pleasure: As it is still the FATHER'S GOOD PLEASURE to give this heavenly kingdom: Like Canaan, the heavenly country is the pleasant land: In it alone is to be found the tree of life, which yields all manner of PLEASANT FRUITS. If the earthly Canaan was a land of brooks, and fountains of waters, the heavenly Canaan is watered with the river of the Water of Life, pure as crystal. If Canaan was the glory of all lands, as it had the seat of God's worship in it, and the symbols of God's presence; How much more glorious is the heavenly Canaan? as there the King Eternal and Immortal ever reigns, in light inaccessible, and full of glory!—I might also have observed, That this promise is also conceived in such terms as if it were already accomplished, though the accomplishment was some hundreds of years distant. The reason of this manner of expression seems to be, Ge
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had already made a deed of conveyance to Abram; and this was an enlargement of those preceding grants. He might say, then, that he had given this inheritance already, by promise, though not in actual possession. Another reason for this manner of speech is, the prophetic style in which God speaks of things future as past; because his word is as certain as the accomplishment of it.

SECONDLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant may next be considered.

1. IT obtained after Abram had been guilty of dissimulation concerning Sarai, his wife. Some have endeavoured to excuse the patriarch in this matter, indeed; but that is impossible: No real, or supposed danger, can ever be a sufficient reason of imitating the devil, who is a liar from the beginning. Now, God renewed the covenant with him, after this fall, to declare the stability of his purpose, and the freedom of his grace. God prevents faints, as well as sinners, with the blessings of his goodness. The treachery, even of his own people, cannot evacuate his covenant; nor debar them from access to himself by covenant-renovation.

2. THIS covenant-renovation obtained after God had given him a most signal victory over the four confederate kings who sacked
* T Sodom.

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Sodom. The victory over these kings, and the recapture of Lot, with the spoils of Sodom, were, at once, a prelude of Christ's victory over the serpent and his seed, and a confirmation of former promises. The covenant which God made with Abram was a renovation of the promise made to Adam, as we have seen, and as this victory prefigured that of the Messiah, so it was a confirmation of that promise. By this conquest Abram was made to see, that God would add one blessing unto another, and that to him; while he poured out his wrath and a curse upon his enemies. And covenant-renewal was seasonable at this time, as it afforded Abram an opportunity to testify his gratitude unto the great deliverer, and assured him of divine protection from the rage of man.

3. THIS covenant-renewal took place after Abram had been blessed by Melchisedec, the priest of the Most High God. It is before our purpose to recite and refute all the various opinions invented concerning this illustrious person. That which appears to me to be the just one is, That he was a man of the same species with ourselves; but his descent and succession are wisely concealed, that he might prefigure him who is from everlasting to everlasting, who hath also an unchangeable priesthood. The special act of the priest's office, which Melchisedec performed on this occasion was his blessing Abram. Now, this blessing was

an eminent accomplishment of a particular promise in a foregoing covenant. This blessing was a figure of that pronounced and bestowed by the High Priest of our profession. And as the patriarch was blessed with a partial accomplishment of the former promises, so he had renewed calls unto covenant-dedication. Upon the whole, we may conclude, that times of great sinning on our part, and gracious deliverances on the part of God, as well as of begun accomplishment of his promises, ought to be seasons of solemn covenanting.

THIRDLY, I shall now consider the CONFIRMATIONS of these promises. "And he said (namely the Lord Jehovah) unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him*." To this account we might have prefixed Moses's introduction to his transaction: "The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying†." And

* Gen. xv. 9—12. † Gen. xv. 1.

we might subjoin what he further adds to it: "And it came to pass, when the sun was down, and it was dark: Behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces*." These verses exhibit not only the ratification of this covenant, also the origin of that rite which gave occasion to the phrase, to CUT A COVENANT wherefore it deserves very particular consideration. And it may not be improper—1. to observe a few things concerning those animals which were taken for a sign.—2. Concern the rites observed in using them.—3. The appearances made at this time.—And then enquire, How these things confirmed this Covenant.

I. I AM to observe some things concerning the animals which, by God's appointment, were taken for a sign; namely, a heifer of three years old, a she-goat of three years old, an ram of three years old; with a turtle dove and a young pigeon. From the manner of expression used in the sacred text, some expositors have concluded †, that Abram was commanded

* Gen. xv. 17.

† Such as Onkelos, Jarchi, and Kimchi, among Jews; and some Christians seem not greatly averse to it. But, for the reason above assigned, it appears they are mistaken: For, though the plural be sometimes used by the Hebrews for singular, yet the singular is ne-

manded to take three of each species of animals; but that their number is not all expressed. But the conclusion appears to be ill founded: For the terms heifer, goat, and ram, are all of them in the singular number; whereas, if three of each kind had been intended, the words would certainly have been plural. These animals were probably fixed on at this time, because God intended afterwards to appoint the same species to be used under the Ceremonial Law: Now, the confirmation of this covenant was that law in miniature; as Abram had all the subjects of that law in his loins when he offered these sacrifices. The four footed beasts were three years old, and the pigeons young ones: The pigeons being fittest for use when young; and quadrupedes are in their highest perfection, in eastern countries, in their third year. God still requires of his people to honour him with the best things he has bestowed on them.

II. WE may now attend unto the Rites which were used in the confirmation of this covenant: And two things are ascribed to Abram.

used for the plural, unless when used indefinitely, as the word PEOPLE in all languages: But here the sacred historian speaks of a definite number. Moreover, it is the usual style of the Hebrews to express the term of age in this manner. Vide Bochart, Hier. Lib. II. cap. xxviii.

1. HE divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. Though it does not appear to us, that Abram received any divine commission to divide the beasts in twain; yet may we not charge him with will-worship: For I might know that it was the mind of God, either by immediate inspiration, as he was prophet; or he might do it, as it was the usual mode of using sacrifices destined for covenant-confirmation. And it is not improbable, that, as many sacrifices were offered to the patriarchs, which are not recorded, many federal transactions obtained which are not registrated likewise; though those are revealed that contain the most material alterations of the state of religion. Many learned men have displayed abundance of classic learning, in shewing that this rite was borrowed from the Church of God, for the confirmation of civil covenants among the heathen nations *. “But the birds divided he not.” The reasons why he did not divide them are uncertain, the conjectures of the learned, on this matter, are various. The first reason, to me, appears to be, because these rites were an epitome of the Ceremonial Law; and when that law was afterwards completed, the division of birds was expressly prohibited. But

* Oweni Theologumen. Lib. III. cap. i. Wits. Con. Fœd. Lib. I. cap. i. Heidegger. Histor. Patr. Test. Exercit. ii. Thef. 19.

if it be still enquired, Why the birds were not divided, according to the Mosaic institution? It may be answered, That as the division of quadrupedes may represent the separation of the soul of the great sacrifice from his body; so the non-division of the fowls may be expressive of his undivided person. "Though his soul was separated from his body, yet neither soul nor body was separated from the Son of God: But incomprehensibly, and ineffably united, when in the grave, and in the dust of death*." The solidity of this opinion is submitted to the judgment of the learned and candid reader.

2. ANOTHER rite observed by Abram is, his driving away the birds which came down on the carcases. The birds which came down upon the sacrifice have been deemed emblems of evil spirits, which, like eagles, or birds of prey, come down on the children of God, especially when presenting themselves as living sacrifices unto their heavenly Father, in the duties of his worship: And the patriarch's driving them away, has been considered as expressive of the saints driving away, or resisting the temptations of the devil. Others have explained these ravenous beasts of the Egyptians, who preyed on the seed of Abram, as was

* F. Spanheim, F. F. Obser. Histor. Typic. et Mor. in Levit. cap. i. Mather on the Types, p. 261.

foretold on this occasion. I see no reason why both these senses may not rather be conjoined than opposed. Only I would choose to understand the patriarch's driving away these birds as denoting the special protection, and prevalent intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, rather than the faith, and prayer of Abram himself, for the deliverance of his literal seed, as various expositors have insinuated.

III. WE promised, in the next place, to consider the dreadful appearance which God made to Abram at this time. The first appearance recorded by Moses, is called a VISION; but, as there were various kinds of visions, the nature and species of appearance is not easily determined. Says Dr Owen, "Visions were of two sorts: OUTWARD REPRESENTATIONS of things unto the bodily eyes of the prophets; and INWARD REPRESENTATIONS unto their minds.—There were sometimes appearance of persons, or things, made unto their outward senses: And herein God made use of the ministry of angels. Thus, three men appeared to Abram, one of whom was the Son of God himself; the other two ministering angels, as hath been proved elsewhere. So was the burning bush, &c.—They were made sometimes only to their minds. So it is expressly said, that when Peter saw his vision of a sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down from heaven to the earth, he was in a TRANCE.—A DEXTASIS seized

seized upon him, whereby, for a season, he was deprived of the use of his bodily senses *," &c.

THIS vision, I presume, was of the bodily kind; for it does not appear that the patriarch was extatical, but deliberate in all the conferences that ensued. It was the WORD of Jehovah who appeared at this time; and this appearance was a renewed confirmation of the covenant which had been granted oftener than once for the ratification of the preceding covenant. The reason of the Son's appearance has been above explained.

THE second appearance was more dreadful and stupendous: "When the sun went down, and it was dark; behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, which passed between the pieces." By the institution of God, and the act of the sacrificer, these sacrifices took the place of the guilty, being substituted in the room of Abram and his seed. The smoking furnace figured out the dark dispensations of providence towards the Israelites: Hence we find the inspired writers not only alluding unto this vision, but also explaining it: "But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the IRON FURNACE, even out of Egypt; to be a people of inheritance, as ye

* Dr Owen on the Spirit, p. 108.

are this day." Said Solomon, "For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the FURNACE of iron." The Lord also addressed the Jews to the following purpose: "The covenant which I commanded your Fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the furnace of iron."—"When the cloud began to break the smoke went up." The smoke ascended as the smoke of a furnace, pointing out the manner in which their deliverance did advance. Each circumstance mentioned in the sacred narrative added to the horror of the scene, however, at this time. The sun went down; it was dark; smoke added to the horror of the darkness. Hence we need not greatly wonder, if a horror of great darkness fell on Abram, both on account of God's awful Majesty, and also on account of the night season predicted to the Church in his family. The burning lamp denoted God's favourable providences towards the promised Seed: It may also be considered as a prelude of the pillar of fire, and pillar of cloud, which conducted Israel through the wilderness; which were also emblems of the divine presence and majesty dwelling among the Israelites. This vision is not unlike that of Ezekiel: "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire; and like the appearance

pearance of lamps *." The former importing adversity, and the latter prosperity. Though the glory of Abram's family might be greatly obscured; yet their lamp shall not be utterly extinguished: On the contrary, it shall burn with remarkable splendor; "When God shall judge that nation whom they shall serve, then shall they come forth with great substance." This promised deliverance prefigured the Redeemer's victory over the devil; as Pharaoh was also an emblem of him: And this burning lamp was a graphical display of the Messiah's victory, when his right hand and his holy arm got unto him the victory. Out of his nostrils came forth a smoke; he hath eyes like a flame of fire; and feet as fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.

IV. THE last thing we promised was, To shew how all these things confirmed this covenant: And these rites confirmed it,

1. As the Parties covenanting were both included in one sacrifice. Learned men have observed, how Generals and armies both passed through between the parts of sacrifices †, to intimate their strict coalescence into one body. Thus believers are one with God through the slain sacrifice, or separated soul and body of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are one in him.

* Ezek. i. 13.

† Calvin in Gen. xv. 10.

2. As the parties passing between the sacrifices thus divided, imprecated such a division on themselves, should they deal falsely in this covenant. Hence God threatens the Jews saying, "The men who have not performed the covenant which they made before me when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.—I will even give the dead bodies to be meat for the fowls of heaven *." The birds of prey should perch on the dead bodies of the Jews, as they would have done on the bodies of the sacrifices, had not Abram driven them away; and, like the sacrifices, they should be cut assunder. It must be observed, however, that God could neither fail nor suffer for it: But, in condescension to the weakness of his friend, he pledges his life and happiness, for the accomplishment of his faithful promise, to bring him to the full assurance of faith.

3. CHIEFLY as these sacrifices prefigured the true sacrifice of the Son of God, for the full and final confirmation of the covenant of grace. But this use of sacrifice has been explained above, and what has been observed already needs not be here repeated †.

* Jer. xxxiv. 18. 20.

† See the Introduction.

P A R T III.

GEN. xvii. 1—21.

HERE it will be proper to consider,—I. The Mosaic account of the Parties in this Transaction.—II. The Parts of it.—III. Its Confirmation.—And, IV. The Occasions of it,

FIRST, I am to consider the MOSAIC DESCRIPTION of the PARTIES Covenanting:—Which are Abram and his Seed.

1. THE great author and chief party in this transaction announceth himself to be the Great God,—GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT; or, as others render it, THE ALMIGHTY GOD*. From the scope of the place, it appears, that the former translation is more apposite than the latter, though it is readily granted, that there is a manifest coincidence between them; for

* So our translators render it. But it has always been considered as one of the divine names; and many have left it untranslated: The original word is, SCHADDAI, ^{וְשֵׁ}. The Hebrew linguists are as much divided about its derivation as its signification. Buxtorf enumerates no fewer than five or six different derivations, Dissert. De nominibus Dei Hebraicis, § 48. That which approves itself most to me is from ^{וְ} pro ^{וְשֵׁ} WHO, and ^{וְ} SUFFICIENT: That is, HE WHO IS SUFFICIENT; or, ^{וְ} it is usually rendered, ALL SUFFICIENT.

all-sufficiency comprehends the idea of omnipotence, as well as that of many other perfections. God, even the Son, is ALL-SUFFICIENT unto his own blessedness, as well as unto the happiness of his creatures. Of consequence, he is abundantly able to accomplish his promises, and enable his people to obey his precepts. How comfortable is it to covenant with such a party ! One who needs nothing at our hand. Hence, this covenant is all evangelical,—all in favour of Abram and his children.

2. THE other party is Abram and his seed. Said God to Abram, “ I establish my covenant between me and THEE, and THY SEED AFTER THEE, in their generations.” God considered Abram as already in covenant with himself. This is evident from the terms in which this covenant is proposed : Said he, “ I will ESTABLISH my covenant between me and thee *.” It deserves also to be noticed, that God caused the name of the principal covenanter to be changed : “ Neither shall thy name any more be called ABRAM : but thy name shall be ABRAHAM ; for a father of many nations have I made thee †.” Accordingly, his
name

* See the foregoing Dissertation, Part I.

† The patriarch's first name was אַבְרָם : His last name אַבְרָהָם. The former imports an high father ; the latter,

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name carried in it a continual representation of God's promise, given for the perpetual consolation of the Church. Again, this covenant was made with Abraham; and also with his SEED after him, in their generations. More particularly, This covenant was made with Abram, as a type of his extraordinary Seed: "Now, to Abraham, and to his Seed, were the promises made: He saith not and to seeds, as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ." Once more, This covenant was made with Abraham as the principal member of the visible Church; and his Seed, represented by him, as the infants of the members of the visible Church are represented by

ter, as explained by God himself, means a father of many nations. Sundry Jews, and some Christians, reckon, that אב is taken from the name JEHOVAH; but this composition is not so agreeable to the infallible exposition just now mentioned. The proper derivation of that name which was imposed on him, appears to be from אב FATHER, and רבון A MULTITUDE. And ר is retained from אר: And the signification may be expressed thus, The FATHER OF A MULTITUDE. Taken in this point of view, it contains a solemn representation of the implantation of Gentile believers into the covenant of Abraham: For, as Calvin observes, with great propriety, he became the FATHER OF MANY NATIONS, not by his issue spreading through many nations (though he had many sons); nor did they ever incorporate with any other people: But by the adoption of strangers to be fellow-citizens with him and his seed, and their joint admission into the household of God.

their

their parents in baptism*. By the law of nature and the wise appointment of God's word, infants may receive grants for the behoof of their children; and also bind for their children's performance of certain duties. Such things obtain every day in all societies under heaven. And why should it not obtain likewise in the Church, the most perfect of all societies? Thus, all who sprang from Abraham were externally holy, till they cut off themselves

* Vide Calvin. Institut. Lib. IV. cap. xvi. Thes. 4. Ball's Treatise on the Covenant of Grace, p. 50. F. Turretin. Loc. xxix. Q. 20. Thes. 5.—From these divines have established the right of infants, within the visible Church, unto the benefits of the Covenant of Grace; and particularly unto the initiating of it, with a degree of evidence not to be resisted.

The last mentioned author useth the following topics:

“ ad infantes pertinere fœdus patet ex clausula fœderis
 “ Gen. xvii. 7. Act. ii. 38. Fateor quidem Fœdus
 “ primario, et præcipue adultos respicere, quia
 “ tale pactum reciproca conventionem constat, quæ
 “ bique voluntaria esse debet, et sapientiam Dei
 “ Fœdus pascisci cum hominibus perfectis, qui per
 “ exercere operationes facultatum moralium. Sed
 “ non obstat, quominus pertineat quoque ad infantes
 “ 1. Ex Dei ordine, quia ita voluit gratiam suam
 “ tendere a parentibus ad liberos.—2. Ex rei nature
 “ quia liberi sunt pars parentum, et ejusdem conditionis.—3. Inter homines pacta ad liberos
 “ trahentiam complectuntur, Ergo et in fœdere Dei
 “ 4. Quia ad infantes pertinet res significata, purgatio
 “ missio peccatorum, regeneratio, regnum cœlorum
 “ Ergo etiam signum, nam si quid majus est illis con
 “ nicatur, qua ratione posset illis denegari quod
 “ est sic argumentatur Petrus Act. x. 47.

unbelief and disobedience. Hence, Ishmael was circumcised, as well as Isaac; nor were the sons of Keturah, and those of the hired servants, on an inferior footing, till they relinquished the service of God.

In fine, Abraham must be considered, in this transaction, as having the Messiah in his loins. Now, as he paid tythes to Melchisedec, for Levi, who was then in his loins; so he received promises for the Messiah, his extraordinary seed, then in his loins likewise*.

SECONDLY, We may now consider the **Parts** of this Covenant. With respect unto the All-sufficient Jehovah, I may observe,

1. He promised to "multiply Abraham's seed exceedingly,—to make him exceeding fruitful,—to make nations of him, and kings come out of him†." And the prediction has been circumstantially verified, both in his natural and spiritual progeny. From Abraham, according to the flesh, sprang not only the Ishmaelites, and Edomites (as well as the Israelites); but also, the Saracens, Arabians, and Midianites. He was fruitful to a miracle, even in his old age. Forty-six years before the death of Sarah, when God announced the birth of Isaac, he exclaimed, "Shall a child be born

* Gal. iii. 16.

† Gen. xxi. 2, 6.

to him who is a hundred years old !” Yet, after the death of Sarah, Keturah bare him no fewer than six sons.—As to his spiritual progeny, nations have been born at once, and a people brought forth in one day; and, in the lowest state of his spiritual family, it shall be said, This man and that man was born in it, and the Highest himself shall establish it. In respect of the ROYALTY promised to the patriarch, it has also been most punctually fulfilled. There sprang from the patriarch, not only a race of famous kings, in the Davidical line, not to mention the princes of Midian and Ishmael; but also MESSIAH THE PRINCE, with all his royal nation: For all his subjects are made KINGS and priests unto God and his father*.

2. JEHOVAH engaged to be a God unto Abraham, and his Seed after him†. This blessing is all-comprehensive, and inutterably precious: It includes all things pertaining unto life and godliness, whether it be a life of grace or glory. All the perfections of God, and each perfection in the Godhead, are made over to Abraham and his Seed. Divine wisdom is engaged for the device of their salvation; divine power for their protection and defence, as also for the performance of all those promises which contain the blessings of salvation; divine

* Rev. i. 6. † Gen. xvii. 7.

mercy pledged for their remission and acceptance; holiness for their enjoyment of every promised blessing. Justice, for the destruction of all their enemies: And, in one word, grace for their holiness and consolation while in this world, as well as their reward in the world to come.—The Father is the portion of the spiritual Seed, in his electing and adopting love, and in his giving love: He gives his Son to be a suffering surety and himself in him as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.—The Son is the portion of the spiritual family, in all the fulness of his grace and righteousness.—The Holy Ghost, in respect of his personal inhabitation, and special influences and saving operations. Hail, happy people, whose God is Jehovah! Such as are filled with the fulness of God, How durable their portion!—How substantial their bliss!

13. As an appendage unto these grants, God was pleased to renew the promise of Canaan: "And I will give unto thee, and unto thy Seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger,—all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession *." Besides what has been observed on a former covenant, I shall examine the two following questions, relative to this inheritance: First, How could God say, I will give the land wherein thou art a stranger UNTO

* Gen. xvii. 8.

3. GOD commanded Abraham to observe the ordinance of Circumcision: But we shall speak of this ordinance when the ratification of this covenant is considered.

UPON the whole, In this covenant both privileges and duties are expressly proposed by the all-sufficient Jehovah: And the former declared to be the foundation of the latter. God's all-sufficiency is the cause of Abraham's walking before him, and of his perfection; while the rite of circumcision is enjoined from the consideration of all these grants which were made on this occasion *. Abraham's engagement to obedience is strongly implied, in his humble prostration before the Lord: He fell on his face; and God talked with him.

THIRDLY, I am now to offer a few things concerning CIRCUMCISION, the confirming seal of this covenant. Here I shall—1. Offer a Remark or two concerning the Nature of this ordinance.—2. Show how it Confirmed the covenant.

I. I shall make a Remark or two concerning the nature of this ordinance.

1. IT did not originate in the wisdom of men; but in the special institution of God, as

* Gen. xvii. 9.

the King and Head of the Old Testament Church. The institution is registrated at length in the sacred volume *. Some who supposed themselves to be Christians, imagined, indeed, that the Seed of Jacob borrowed this rite from the Egyptians; but, from the institution just referred to, it is plain, that it WAS NOT OF MEN, BUT FROM HEAVEN. It is also much more rational to suppose, that the Egyptians might have borrowed this rite from the children of Jacob, than the reverse; if we consider Joseph's interest and administration among that people. As he was Pharaoh's prime minister for the space of eighty years, and provided corn for them in a most deplorable famine, it is but natural to conclude, that the people would be inclined to imitate the man who preserved them. It were easy to shew, that it is the sole prerogative of God to appoint ordinances in his own worship: That he exerted it on this occasion has been demonstrated, with success, by others †.

2. THE

* Gen. xvii. 9.

† Vide Wits. Egyptiac. Lib. III. cap. vi. Leidekk. de Repub. Hebræorum, Lib. II. cap. iv. Heidegger. Histor. Patriarch. Tom. II. Exercit. vii. § 28. One would imagine, that the ghost of a SPENCER, and of a MARSHAM, would have been effectually conjured by the reasons which these learned men have adduced: But, strange to tell! the souls of one or both of these gentlemen seem to have been transmigrated into good Bishop Warburton: For their exploded dreams have been received

2. THE subjects of this ordinance were Abraham, with all the males in his house, and their male children after them, in their generations. "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-kin: He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations: he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised*." The subjects of this ordinance, then, are reducible to the following classes:—Abraham, the head of the family, that he might be both the pattern and minister of circumcision to all the rest of the males who were under his roof.—The Male Servants of Abraham's family who were adults. All the men of his house, born in the house, or bought with money, were of this description. It has been enquired, How Abraham's servants could be proper subjects of circumcision; seeing it is probable they were strangers to the true religion? Some have also imagined that it seems to favour compulsory measures in matters of religion; as masters maintained a despotic power over their domestics at that time. To both difficulties it may be answered, That

ceived by his genius, and defended, after a way, by his pen. Happily for the Church of God, however, an antidote for his poison was provided before he was born.

* Gen. xvii. 11—13.

Abraham's family had the benefit of a religious education, and were, therefore, capable of making a public profession of the true religion: For God bore this honourable testimony unto him. "I know him, that he shall command his household after him; and they shall serve the Lord." Hence we may conclude, that the males of his family were proselytes of righteousness; and entitled to circumcision as well as all other ordinances which belonged to the Church in her domestic state.—With respect to such as should be bought in after times, they were either persons who made a voluntary renunciation of idolatry, and profession of the true religion as the foundation of their right to circumcision: Or, if they retained their idolatrous and superstitious sentiments, it behoved them to do it only in private; nor were they admitted to dwell in the Hebrew families, although they might perform certain services in them. For the divine law permitted none to dwell in these families but such as were fit to partake of the passover; while the uncircumcised were incapable of being admitted to that ordinance *.—Another class

* It does not appear that ever God appointed any to be forced to embrace the true religion, even after the Mosaic System was completely established; though he prohibited them from outward acts of false worship. All who joined with the Jews did so voluntarily, without violence or constraint in the smallest degree: Exod. xii. 48. "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and

class of persons to be circumcised was, the seed of these profelytes, and also Ishmael. The promises respected the children as well as the adult; and it was the will of God, that the seal should be administered to both. May we not observe, that the admission of Abraham's servants, with their seed, unto the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, was a solemn prelude of the admission of Gentile sinners, and their seed, unto gospel privileges: and they were the first fruits of that glorious harvest.

—But though Ishmael and the profelytes were, at this time, taken into covenant with God, and admitted to partake of this seal of it; yet was it designed to continue in the line of Isaac, whose birth and prerogatives were, at this time, announced. Other persons shared of covenant privileges by coming in along with him: “But my covenant will I establish

will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near, and keep it.” The manner of admitting profelytes can be learned but in a very imperfect manner from the Rabbinical writers, they have added such a world of ceremonies to the sacred rubric. The Mosaic account just now quoted, taken in connection with the institution of circumcision, furnisheth us with the only certain means of information in this matter. The curious reader may consult, for a swatch of the Rabbinical rites respecting profelytes, what has been gleaned by Leidekker, *De Repub. Heb. Lib. VI. cap. vi. and vii.* By Hottinger, *Thesaur. Philolog. Lib. I. cap. i.* The principal questions which have been agitated concerning them have also been considered by Leusden, *Philolog. Heb. mixt. Dissert. XXI.*

with

with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee : I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him *.”—“In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” It was perpetuated in the family of Isaac and Jacob, until the end for which the seed of Abraham was separated from the rest of mankind was accomplished.—Should any enquire, Why did this ordinance extend only to males ? I would answer, It was so ordered, to shew, that an actual participation of sacraments is not essential to salvation : For females were as really the daughters of Abraham as males ~~were~~ his sons, when they acted faith upon those ~~promises~~ promises which were made to him : And, although they were not circumcised formally, in their own persons ; yet were they circumcised virtually, in their fathers and husbands : So they might not be given in marriage to the uncircumcised. This ordinance was also confined to males, to shew the imperfection of that œconomy : Under that œconomy the preference was given to males ; but, under the better one, “there is neither male nor female ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus †.”

3. THE time for the celebration of this ordinance to infants, fixed by divine appointment, was the eight day : “He that is eight days old shall be circumcised.” God did not re-

* Gen. xvii. 21. and verse 19. † Gal. iii. 28.

quire it sooner, out of regard to the ten infant; and he would not suffer it to be deferred any longer, lest men should contemn by deferring it for ever. If any did, God pointed him to be CUT OFF from among people*: That is, the parent who neglects to circumcise his child should be held as a then-man and a publican, by the Church of God, until he complied with the divine institution. The original word does not always port a cutting off by death; but the suspending or dissolving a relation, whether it be by communication or otherways. And Paul fits to allude unto it, when he said unto the Galatians, "I would they were even CUT that trouble you †."

* The original word is כרת, and, literally, signifies to lop off a branch from a tree. But it is more frequently used in a metaphorical sense. When God himself said to CUT OFF, it seems to import death from his immediate hand: At other times it may import death at the hands of men. It cannot always be taken either in one or the other of these senses, however; but sometimes signify A CUTTING OFF by church-censure. In the case before us, the persons, who neglected to circumcise their seed, were to be excluded themselves from the society of the Church, as contemners of the instituting seal of God's Covenant; and their seed kept off it until they were circumcised by others: Or, if it neglected till they grew up, until they did it themselves. Vide Gilesp. Aaron's Rod. Lib. I. chap. v. Leic. De Rep. Heb. Lib. II. cap. viii. thes. 7.

† Gal. v. 12.

II. It was also proposed, on this head, to shew, How this ordinance Ratified this covenant. It was not an insignificant rite; but nobly expressive of privileges conveyed by this transaction, and also a seal for the confirmation of it.

1. CIRCUMCISION sealed this covenant, as it prefigured the blood and righteousness of the Messiah, by which the promises should be ratified in due time: "and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had, being yet uncircumcised *." As Abraham was a type of Christ, because the promises were made unto him as well as unto Christ; so he was likewise a type of him, as he and all his covenanted seed shed their blood for the ratification of these promises. But their being typical in one respect does not imply, that they were so in all things: For they enjoyed spiritual privileges, as well as typical ones; and they performed moral as well as ceremonial worship in like manner.

2. CIRCUMCISION sealed this covenant, as it contained an emblematical representation of mortification of the body of sin, which is one of the distinguished blessings of it. In this sacrament there was a cutting off a part of the natural body; and the thing signified is ex-

* Rom. iv. 11

pressed by the name of this ordinance, in the sacred oracles *. Hence, the precept, circumcise the fore-skin of your heart, is of the same import with "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth.

3. THIS ordinance confirmed the covenant, as, by the observance of it, persons declared their acceptance of covenant-promises and privileges; and their Engagement to the performance of all covenant-duties. Accordingly, the circumcised person became bound to fulfil the whole law. Circumcision was not only a token for good to the person, as it gave the worthy receiver an assurance of the accomplishment of God's promises; but also a badge of the profession of the true religion, restored to, and preserved in the family of Abraham.

FOURTHLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant are to be considered in the last place.

1. THIS covenant-renovation with Abraham obtained after he had been guilty of Adultery with Hagar. This part of his conduct implied in it a complication of evils. It was not only a distrust of God's promise respecting his seed, by taking improper means for the accomplishment of it; but also a down-right violation of that order which God established.

* Deut. xxx. 6.

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when he created man male and female. Tho' the patriarch was a great believer; yet he greatly failed in that very grace in which he excelled: Though he was strong in faith; yet so weak as to yield to Sarah's solicitations, when she proposed an unlawful expedient for the accomplishment of a former covenant-grant. But his transgression could not make the covenant of none effect. This renovation of it was a new proof of God's sovereignty and faithfulness.

1. IT was renewed after Abraham had been chastised for his adultery, by the discord which took place in his family. While Hagar valued herself on her conception, her mistress was despised in her eyes: and her contempt of Sarai could not fail to draw down her mistress's resentment, both on Abraham and the hand-maid. Abraham delivered the hand-maid into the power of her mistress: Sarah afflicted her so severely, that she fled from her presence; and would have gone back to her native country, had she not been prohibited by an angel of the Lord. These vehement contests could not but fill the patriarch's mind with bitter remorse; and leave a sting in his conscience for violating, at once, the law of nature and his marriage-covenant.

3. In one word, This covenant-renovation obtained in the ninetyeth and ninth year of Abraham's

braham's life : Twenty-four years after his call from Ur of the Chaldees : And seventeen years after the last covenanting in which Abraham had been engaged. In the interval between the first and second instances of covenanting, God paid many visits to the patriarch ; but, between the second and this third instance of it, we read not of so much as one. It is not improbable, that God hid his face from him, for such a long space of time, as a further chastisement of his dissimulation and adultery.

Now, These things rendered covenant-renovation extremely proper at this time.— To demonstrate, that neither the sin of covenanters, nor God's paternal chastisement of them do make the covenant-promises of none effect. Though God visit the iniquities of his covenanted children with the rod, and that for a very long time ; yet he will not remove his loving kindness from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail.— To rectify Abraham's mistake respecting the promised Seed. Formerly he was suspicious, that the blessed Seed might spring from his steward, and not from himself : Now he might be ready to imagine, that he would spring from the bond-woman, and to take Ishmael for his ancestor : But this transaction taught him, to look for the accomplishment of the promise by the free-woman.— The renovation of the covenant was delayed till this time, and no longer, that the faith

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faith of Abraham might be tried with waiting God's time, on the one hand; and his impatience also chastised, which impelled him to grasp at comfort, before it was given him, on the other. The patriarch was taught to look over human ability, unto divine sovereignty, for all he had to expect by this covenant. Had the promise of making Sarah a mother been given at an earlier period, less of God would have been seen in the accomplishment of it; but now there is no room to ascribe that event unto any other.

P A R T IV.

GEN. xxii. 15—18.

IN surveying this Transaction, I shall follow the same method as in the foregoing Part.

FIRST, I must give a short view of the **PARTIES** covenanting.

1. THE first party is denominated "THE ANGEL OF THE LORD." He is the very same angel who stopt the slaughter of Isaac: "And the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: And
* Z he

he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou thing to him: for now I know that thou art God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.—And the voice of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time *.” He who spake to Abraham the second time, is the very person from whom the patriarch did not withhold his son, even his only son; of consequence he can be no other than the uncreated ANGELOUS OF THE COVENANT: For Abraham never intended to offer Isaac unto an inferior object. The name ANGEL imports mission; or he is sent. When it is applied to the Son of God, it denotes his being the sent of God for

* Gen. xxii. 11, 12. and ver. 15.

† Dr Willet imagined it was a created angel who pronounced this promise unto the patriarch; but the reasons he assigns for his opinion are by no means decisive. “This angel (says the Dr) was not Christ; for the angel addeth, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, I speaketh then in the person of the Lord, as becometh the Lord himself; but Christ, being God, would not be spoken in his own person.” Granting it was the Father who swore, Why might not Christ, as the messenger of the Father, reveal his purpose?—Why may he not speak in the name of the Father, saying, THUS SAITH THE LORD? But there is no necessity to understand this of the Father. This was common style when any divine person spoke unto the prophets, Jer. i. 7, 8 a further illustration of this subject, see Donch. de verbis Elohim, p. 31. Dr Owen on Heb. vi. 13, 14

salv

salvation of men*. When this Angel deals with men, by way of fœderal tranſaction, he reveals the Father's will, as a prophet; and they reſtipulate obedience unto him, as a king.

2. THE other party is Abraham, and his ſon Iſaac. Abraham is the only perſon mentioned in the ſacred hiſtory, indeed; but Iſaac ſeems to be alſo included, as he was taken along with his father unto mount Moriah. Be-

* “Vox מלאך nomen eſt officii, ſignificat enim LEGATUM, NUNCIUM, MIſſUM. Quidam ab וָלַךְ deducunt, h. e. IVIT, AMBULAVIT, tranſpoſita litera ו et eadem in ו mutata, ut ſit, qui mandatum habeat a ſuo Domino, eundi ad aliquid annunciandum vel efficiendum. Alii dici putant, quaſi מַה לְךָ QUID TIBI? h. e. quid novi adfers? Sed hæc alluſio potius eſt, quam vera notatio. Commodius ſignificatio a nomine מַלְאָכָה deducitur (quod ab inuſitato מַלְאָל eſſe volunt) quod ſignificat OPUS, INDUSTRIAM, MINISTERIUM. Ad opus enim mittentis perficiendum מַלְאָךְ LEGATUS mittitur. Tribuitur autem in ſcriptura ſacra, I. Hominiſus, Gen. xxxii. 3. II. Sacerdotiſus, Prophetiſus, Eſ. xlii. 19. Mal. xi. 7. ch. iii. 1. III. Spiritiſus Cœleſtiſus, Gen. xxviii. 12. ch. xxxii. 1. Pſal. xxxiv. 8. IV. Tandem פִּלְיוֹ דֵּי הוֹי FILIO DEI, ſecundæ Trinitatiſus perſonæ tribuitur, ut in allegatiſus ſupra lociſus, notatque (uti ipſum oſtendit etymon) ſanctiſſimum ejus officiū, quod ſcil. miſſuſus fuit a DEO Patre ad exſequendum redemptioniſus opus, uti explicatio habetur, Eſa. lxi. 1. ſeqq. Cumque Chriſtuſus ſit אֲדוֹנָי, IDEM, heri, hodie, et in ſecula, Heb. xiii. 8. igitur in veteri etiam Teſtamento, ejus, quod obituſus erat, muneris ſpecimen quoddam edidit, dum patriſus et piis V. T. in viſibili forma apparens, diviniſus voluntatiſus internuncium egit, operaque diviniſus inter illoſus præſtitit.” GLASS. Onomatolog. Meſſiæ Prophet. apud nomen ANGELUS.

sides this, the Psalmist observes, that the covenant was confirmed to Isaac by AN OATH*: Now, this is the only instance in which God interposed with an oath to him, so far as we know. Isaac had been solemnly declared a covenanter when he was but eight days old; and now, when he had arrived at the age of twenty-five years, it was proper to renew his covenant-engagements in his own person. And, in this respect, he became an example unto every person, early dedicated unto God, in every succeeding period; teaching them to make a grateful return for their privileges, by a solemn renovation of their engagements unto the Lord.

SECONDLY, The next branch of the subject is the PARTS of this Covenant. They consist in a cluster of promises, on the part of God, which are expressed; and correspondent duties, on the part of Abraham and Isaac which are implied.

As to the divine promises contained in this covenant, they were either,

1. SUCH as had been made in former transactions, and renewed in this one: For example The promise of BLESSING the patriarch †; and also the promise of MULTIPLYING him, which

* Psal. cv. 9. † Gen. xii. 2. comp. with Gen. xxii. 17.

had been renewed oftener than once before this time *: And as to that declaration, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be BLESSED;" it is an amplification of former grants. In the first transaction, the promise was expressed thus, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed †:" But in this one, it runs thus, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth BLESS THEMSELVES †." Taken

* Gen. xii. 2. compared with chap. xiii. 16. chap. xv. 5. chap. xxii. 17. † Gen. xxii. 3.

‡ Gen. xxii. 18.—"Pretereundum etiam non est notabilis, quæ occurrit, locutionis diversitas. Abrahamo identidem dicit Deus, *וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ* BENEDICENTUR omnes familix terræ, Gen. xii. 3. and xviii. 18. Sed de Semine Abrahami dicitur *וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ* ET BENEDICENT SIBI IN SEMINE TUO OMNES NATIONES terræ, Gen. xxii. 18. Quod de Semine Isaaci repetitur, Gen. xxvi. 4. sciz. alio modo benedicimur in Abrahamo; aliter in ipsius Semine, Christo. In Abrahamo, ut in typo et exemplari: in Christo, ut benedictionis causa meritoria, et vero datori, Eph. i. 3. Neque solum benedicimur, sed, ET BENEDICIMUS NOBIS in Christo, cum ut benedictionis ad nos dimanantis fontem et Scaturiginem agnoscimus et celebrantes. Qui benedicet sibi in terra, benedicet sibi in Deo veritatis, Is. lxxv. 16." Wits. De Oecon. Fæd.—The meaning of which is, in short: There is notable diversity of phrase, which ought not to be disregarded; for, in Gen. xii. 3. and xviii. 18. God said to Abraham, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be BLESSED." But in Gen. xxii. 18. it is said of the Seed of Abraham, "Nations shall BLESS THEMSELVES IN HIM." That is, they are blessed in Abraham only as the type and exemplar; in Christ, as the meritorious cause and true author, &c. Our translators have not observed the distinction

Taken in this light, which is the only one consistent with the sacred original, it points out not only the special object of faith,—the BLESSED SEED; but also the peculiar nature of it: For, when persons bless themselves in this Seed, they appropriate to themselves all those blessings with which he is stored.

2. THERE was an additional promise subjoined to those previous grants: “And thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies.” Gates were anciently the seat of judgment and

tion between the different forms of the Hebrew verb, indeed; but Munster, the Tigurine translators, and Piscator have all adverted to it; and translated accordingly. Matthias Flacius Illyricus is copious on this difference of expression. “Ter repetita est promissio erga Abraham; quarto erga Isaacum; et quinto ad Jacobum. “prioribus dux, et ultima, sunt in Niphal, seu passiva voce: “ut recte vertatur, BENEDICETUR. posteriores vero dux, “tertia et quarta, in Hithpael, seu reciproca voce: ut “verti queat, Benedicent se, id est, beatas se esse agnoscant, ac gloriabuntur ob semen Abraham. Prioribus ergo dux, et ultima, sententiæ, diserte loquuntur de passiva benedictione, quæ continget Gentibus, ob Abrahamum et ejus semen: posteriores vero, de agnitione ac celebratione illius acceptæ benedictionis, aut promissæ felicitatis. Admodum autem pulchre, fidei, aut fidelis credentisve hominis, vis aut ingenium, in illa reciprocatione depingitur. Nam fides, aut fidens, et agnoscit, se ob illud semen benedici; et impetrat sibi applicationem illius benedictionis, ad thronum gratiæ cum illo ipso semine accidens; et denique semet consolatur in omnibus difficultatibus ac tentationibus, se confirmando de illa Dei benedictione.” Clavem Script. apud vocem BENEDICERE.

strength:

strength: In them the elders of cities sat in council; in them the armour of the city was deposited; and from thence did they sally forth against the besiegers. This promise has been accomplished to the Seed of Abraham in every sense of the word. In the literal sense of the terms, it was accomplished, both in the victories of Joshua and David; they not only skirmished on the coasts of their enemies, but also stormed their fenced cities, and entered their citadels. In the spiritual sense, it was still more amply verified in the victory of the Captain of our Salvation: He erected his kingdom, and swayed his sceptre, even where Satan had his seat. This was not only accomplished in the conquest of the Gentile nations by the gospel; but is also daily fulfilled in the conversion of every particular believer. Prior to conversion, every heart is a strong-hold, fortified by all the art of hell, to hold out against the LEADER OF THE PEOPLE. But his weapons are MIGHTY to the pulling down of STRONG-HOLDS. And all his people shall be more than conquerors through him.

THIRDLY, I shall next advert unto the OATH which God interposed for the CONFIRMATION of this Covenant. The writers of both Testaments sometimes refer to this solemnity. The sacred historian declares, that it was intimated to the patriarch himself, by the uncreated angel who appeared to him at this

this time : “ And the angel of the Lord call
unto Abraham out of heaven the second tim
and said, by myself have I sworn, faith t
Lord, for because thou hast done this thin
and hast not with-held thy son, thine only so
That in blessing,” &c. The Apostle, howev
comments, at large, on this wonderful step
divine condescension : “ For when God ma
promise to Abraham, because he could swe
by none greater, he sware by himself, sayin
Surely blessing I will blest thee, and multipl
ing I will multiply thee. For men verily swe
by the greater : and an oath for confirmati
is the end of all strife. Wherein God, wi
ing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs
promise the immutability of his counsel, co
firmed it by an oath : That, by two immutat
things, in which it was impossible for God
lie, we might have strong consolation wh
have fled, for refuge, to lay hold on the ho
set before us *.” I might have enquired,
what manner God swears ; and, For what pu
poses he swears ; but on these I need not e
ter, considering what has been said on t
confirmation of Noah’s Covenant.

FOURTHLY, I shall now attend unto t
OCCASIONS of this Covenant. It obtain
twenty-six years after the institution of circum
cision ; and fifty years after the first foeder

* Gen. xii. 15—17. compared with Heb. vi. 13—18

PART 4. DISSERTATION II. 185

transaction between God and Abraham. The space of time between this and the last covenant, which is upon record, is filled up with many signal mercies on the part of God; and some acts of obedience, not without several infirmities, on the part of Abraham.

1. GOD made a gracious visit to the patriarch soon after he had celebrated the sacrament of circumcision. As a fresh proof to him at this time, he was pleased to unbosom himself respecting his future designs, particularly the destruction of Sodom. He also permitted Abraham to entreat him in favour of that wicked city, and shewed infinite condescension, by the attention he paid to his supplications. But such was the wickedness of Sodom, that the patriarch could not expect to find even ten righteous persons in it; which, if he had, it would have been spared for their sakes: Therefore he was obliged to desist from his intercession. The divine condescension, which descended from demanding fifty to demand only ten righteous persons, was eminently glorified by yielding unto the incessant supplications of the friend of God: And it still instructs his servants and people to supplicate sparing mercy, on the behalf of sinful cities and nations.

2. ABRAHAM had also relapsed into the sin of dissimulation; and, as covenant-renovation
* A a became

became proper on account of it, so the sovereignty of divine grace was signally displayed by admitting Abraham to join in this duty after that fall. Divine sovereignty must come over multiplied provocations after, as well as before conversion.

3. THIS covenant was made with Abraham after he had received a partial accomplishment of a distinguishing promise in former covenants. God had assured him, that the justification and salvation of his soul depended, in some measure, on the fruit of his body. He saw meet, however, to make a considerable interval between the making of the promise and the accomplishment of it; but that interval was now elapsed. Now the accomplishment of this promise, respecting a Seed, was an earnest of the accomplishment of all the rest. The birth of Isaac was a certain prelude of the birth of the Messiah, in the fulness of time the miraculous circumstances of the former respecting the still more miraculous circumstances of the latter.

4. THIS transaction took place after Ishmael the son of the bond-woman, had persecuted Isaac, the son of the free-woman. This persecution seems to have commenced when Isaac was weaned, which was about the fifth year of his life; and also at the beginning of the four hundred years which had been mentioned;

in the second transaction with this patriarch, which we have considered above. Prior to the birth of Isaac, Abraham was afflicted for the want of seed; after that period he was afflicted in his seed. In this affliction the patriarch was chastised for his adultery with Hagar: By this covenant he was enabled to bear it unto the glory of God, and the benefit of his own soul: By it he was assured, that the son of the free-woman should not be cast out of the covenant; but, on the other hand, confirmed in the enjoyment of the privileges of it: As he had said, on a former occasion, "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee."

5. THE more immediate occasion of this transaction was, the amazing trial and triumph of Abraham's faith, when he received the extraordinary command to offer up his son Isaac. Every thing about it is remarkable, therefore it deserves to be minutely surveyed on all sides.

—The person whom he is commanded to offer is Isaac, a son, an only begotten son in lawful wedlock! It would cost many, who suppose themselves saints, much reasoning in their own minds, to give their substance to the Lord at his call: But, without the smallest hesitation or delay, Abraham gives up his son. It would have been much to have demanded Ishmael, but the mandate pitched on Isaac,—that son with whom the covenant had been

established, and from whom the Messiah was expected. How hard is the command, in every point of view ! Does it not at once crush the feelings of natural affection, and cross the promise of salvation ?——The design of this most wonderful mandate was, at once to try, and advance the faith of the patriarch, as well as that of his sons in after ages. There was such a weight of affliction in this dispensation, that one might well imagine it would draw such a flood of tears from his eyes as might be sufficient to blind him : But it had the very opposite effect ; it served as a typical glass, in which he beheld the work of salvation. If Abraham was so strong in faith, and love to God, as not to withhold his only begotten ; God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Had Abraham heard that another had got the commission to sacrifice Isaac, it had been hard indeed ; but, which makes the case still harder the awful mandate is directed to himself. He must act the priest in this dreadful sacrifice and he proceeded without repining, or disputing, that he might, at once, represent him who was infinitely pleased to bruise his own son ; and also evidence his faith in him who was able to raise Isaac from the dead, even although he had been sacrificed.——It must not be forgotten, however, that every typical representation, even the most glowing, comes

comes short some where, when compared to the glorious substance. Though Isaac was a type of Christ, as bound with the cord and laid upon the altar, prefiguring his being bound with the cords of love; yet he was also a type of the elect, in respect of his release. As God substituted a ram, for a burnt offering, of his providing, in the room of the type; so he substituted a ransom, of his own devising, in the room of elect sinners, the antitype*.

—Should it be enquired, How this act of obedience made way for this covenant-renewal? The Angel of the Covenant accounts for it in the following manner: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee†," &c. The Jesuits make a mighty noise about merit, when explaining this testimony of the angel: But Paul, who understood it infinitely better, finds no merit in the patriarch's obedience at all; whether in this particular act, or in all the parts of it

* The analogy between the type and the antitype might have been minutely sifted, and copiously unfolded; but the reader will observe, that a full consideration of the types is beside my design. This province has already been occupied by others: Witness Ainsworth on the Pentateuch, Dr Owen on the Hebrews, Mather on the Types, and also M'Ewen, who have all handled them in our own language; and Witsius, who has been translated into it, whom see for this type in particular, Lib. IV, chap. vi. § 26--29.

† Gen. xxii. 16, 17.

taken

taken together: "What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness *." The truth is, this act of obedience was the fruit of faith, and Abraham fetched all his supplies of grace and strength from God himself for the performance of it. God was also graciously pleased to reward these noble dispositions, which his own grace had excited, with farther manifestations of his mercy. Is not the reward then all of grace? Where then is the place of merit?

I SHALL NOW offer some REFLECTIONS on what has been advanced on the Abrahamic Covenant.

1. THOUGH there were many things in peculiar to the Old Testament œconomy; yet the greater part of it is addressed to, and perpetual obligation in the Gospel Church. To set this matter in an easy point of view may be observed, That, as Abraham was once a type and a saint, so there are promises made to him, and duties enjoined him, in former respect as well as in the latter: as, the promise of an heir of his own bod-

* Rom. iv. 1—3

multitude of seed, according to the flesh; and their possession of Canaan. It must be observed, however, though the clothing of many of the promises was figurative, yet they contained spiritual privileges under it, even such as true faith was capable of discerning. There were also duties, corresponding in their nature unto these privileges; and these were solemn confirmations of all the promises which were conferred upon him: Such as, circumcision, sacrifice, &c. But these are superseded under the better œconomy: The sacrifice of the Son of God having made the sacrifice and oblation to cease; while baptism holds the place of circumcision in the Gospel Church. But, though we readily grant, that some things in this covenant are typical; yet it by no means follows, that all things in it were of that nature. It might be easily shown, that the most capital promises of this covenant are transferred, by the great promiser, unto the members of the Gospel Church: For example, that promise, "I will be a God unto thee," &c. stands also in the new Covenant, "I will be unto them a God." Some fondly imagine, indeed, that such promises contain only temporal and typical blessings: But I would gladly know, How God can be a typical God unto any? We live in an age in which men seem to exceed old Origen himself, in fondness to allegorize. God himself, and all things under him, are turned into shadow, or allegory, to make

make way for a favourite hypothesis. bold writer strikes out body from the li-
 realities; another cuts off spirit from the
 list; a third fears not to aver, That God
 only a figurative God, unto the childre
 Israel at least! But happy are those person
 happy that people, whose God is Jehc
 The Most High is a God and portion to
 people, without a figure, after all that
 can say about it.—As to the duties requ
 they are of perpetual obligation; as the
 mises are for perpetual consolation: Suc
 faith in God's promise; hence New Testa
 saints are said to walk in THE FOOTSTEP
 THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM*. The patri
 walking BEFORE GOD is also much a-kin
 the duties required in the first command
 of the decalogue. Should any enquire, I
 Abrahamic Covenant, under the notion
 covenant, be extended unto the Gospel Chu
 Let the Apostle Peter answer, "Ye are
 children of the prophets, and of the cov
 which God made with our fathers, saying
 to Abraham, And in thy Seed shall all the
 dreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first
 having raised up his Son Jesus Christ, sent
 to bless you, in turning away every one o
 from his iniquities†." Though Peter deliv
 this sermon to Israelites, yet he was exhibit
 and offering privileges which belonged to

* Rom. iv. 12. † Acts iii. 25, 26.

members of the Gospel Church; this sermon being delivered after that Church was constituted. The fact is, this covenant was continued in the Gospel Church, when the natural branches were broken off; and, for a very long time, cast out, with such alterations and enlargements as her case required. Many, at this time, suppose themselves to be the children of Abraham, and imagine they are entitled to a higher place in his family than others; but, at the same time, they imagine, they may excuse themselves from imitating him in this part of his conduct: They may be very good children in his family, though they never, like him, enter into covenant with God. But such persons would do well to consider the characteristic of Abraham's family, drawn by Truth itself: "Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." As it is vain to boast of inward faith and outward privileges, without charity; so it is equally vain to glory in the most solemn professions of charity, in the modern sense of the word, while persons neglect the principal lineament in his character, and the principal branch of his conduct respecting the highest of objects—his Maker.

2. SELF-DENIAL is a peculiar characteristic of genuine covenanters. How much of this grace and duty is exemplified in Abraham! He is denied to his native country, his father's

* B b

house,

house, and his own people; yea, and his own son also. In him was notably fulfilled that solemn injunction of our Lord Jesus Christ, concerning self-denial, which he amplifies to the following purpose: "If any man come to me, and HATE NOT (that is, to love only in an inferior degree; or to hate comparatively) father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

3. THE motions of divine providence, though ever subservient to the accomplishment of his word, do not always run, according to human appearance, in a direct line to that end. Providence sometimes moves in an oblique, sometimes in an opposite direction, as it were, unto the word; but it always reacheth the desired end at last. How intricate were the motions of providence—How various its windings, towards conferring a seed on Abraham! But the accomplishment of the promise was as a key unto them all. It evidenced every entire path however opposite like unto the general design, conspired to form a beautiful whole, and was even requisite to constitute and complete it.

DISSERTATION III.

ON ISAAC'S COVENANT.

GEN. xxvi. 2—5.

AS the grace of God was manifested to Noah and Abraham in the way of fœderal transaction; so it was continued to Isaac by way of covenant-renovation. The doctrine of covenant-renovation is as plain in itself as any doctrine of divine revelation; but the craft of Satan has used many efforts to obscure it, while some men imagined they found their account in contributing to the same purpose. If we mean to avoid the stumbling-blocks which have been cast in the way, the most proper course is, to attend unto the sacred history of the fœderal transactions between God and his Church; and to survey the progress of covenanting work, from its very beginning until now.

In considering this transaction, in part I shall—I. Shew who are the Parties in the Covenant.—II. What repetition of former covenants obtained at this time.—III. What promises were made unto former transactors.—IV. The Occasions of this Transaction.—then add a few Reflections.

FIRST, I shall shew who are the Parties in this Covenant.

1. As to the first party, there are two considerations which persuade me he is no other than the Son of God: First, He is the same person who appeared to, and covenanted with Abraham: “I will perform the promises which I swear unto Abraham thy father” * this person who swore to Abraham was no other than the Angel of the Covenant whom we have already seen. Secondly, It is competent to the Son to appear in visible form, he is the only person who intended to take on human nature. The word APPEARED, when granted, sometimes signifies an inward impression unto, or impression on the mind; the primary and proper signification of the term is, to make a VISIBLE APPEARANCE. In this sense it is used in the text before us as well as many other places†. The Son appeared to Isaac in human form, to re-

* Gen. xxvi. 3.

† Gen. xviii. 1. &

DISSERTATION III. 197

of the Father, as a prophet; and to enjoy
 licence to it, as a King. Hence it is that
 ous covenants were made with God
 ough Christ, the mediator, under the Old
 tament, as well as under the New: Yea
 mediator is the very person unto whom
 y were devoted, with whom they inmedia-
 transacted.

THE other party in this transaction is
 ac, the son of the promise; for this trans-
 on was an accomplishment of a covenant-
 ise made unto Abraham.—By pitching
 Isaac God manifested his glorious sove-
 rignty, in distinguishing the elect from the
 reprobate. Ishmael was an example of the
 reprobate, as was Isaac of the former: “Neither
 because they are the seed of Abraham, are they
 children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be cal-
 led.” That is, they which are the children of
 the flesh, these are not the children of God:
 the children of the promise are counted
 the seed*.” Hence Isaac and Ishmael are
 in allegory, in the Scriptures of the New
 Testament; the former denoting those who are
 in the glorious liberty of the Covenant of
 grace, and the latter those who lie under the
 terrible bondage of the Covenant of
 the law. — Isaac was a person of very hea-
 venly dispositions, much employed in medita-

* Gen. ix. 7, 8. † Gal. iv. 22—31.

tion and other religious exercises; therefore, he greatly needed covenant-renovation, to encourage his heart in the righteous ways of the Lord. He was also a person of a very mild temper of mind, of a genius less turned for military enterprize, than either his father or his son: Of consequence, the promises of this covenant were a noble staff for his support, when famine forced him to sojourn in the land of the Philistines.

SECONDLY, I shall now enquire, What RENOVATION of former promises obtained in this Covenant. And there is a very notable assemblage of promises granted on former occasions, which were renewed at this time: Such as the promises of BLESSING, of an inheritance, of a numerous and happy progeny; and of blessing unto the gentile nations through his seed. The renovation of this cluster of promises was extremely proper, to serve Isaac heir, as it were, unto his father, in the right and enjoyment of both temporal and spiritual mercies. It also evidenced the power, grace, and veracity of God, in the advancement of a fabric he had already founded. As the matter of these promises, so the manner in which they were given strongly marked their intention as covenant-renovation. God himself engrossed the last edition of the Abrahamic covenant into this transaction; saying, "I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy

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thy father." Thus God manifested his bearing his covenant still in remembrance, and required a fresh assent unto all that he had sworn; for this declaration was a solemn recognition of all that he had previously done.

THIRDLY, I shall next enquire What **ADDITIONS** were made, at this time, unto former transactions, to accommodate this covenant unto the peculiar circumstances of the patriarch: As to promises,

1. **GOD** promised his special and gracious presence: "And I will be with thee." This promise was some way included, indeed, in a former one, or deducible from it, at least. But as Isaac was on the eve of particular straits, it was fit to bring those blessings, which were remote from his view, near to his sight, for his future support. God promised to be with him, by the inhabitation and influences of his spirit, to comfort him against all grief on every side, and to deliver from all danger from whatever quarter. What fellowship so comfortable as that which is enjoyed with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, through the Holy Ghost.

2. **THERE** were also additional duties required of Isaac, in this covenant. God enjoined him,——To sojourn in the land of Canaan, while he prohibited him from going down into Egypt. This prohibition was probably given him

him for various reasons: The trial of his faith for example; for the occasion of his movement was a famine in the land. Now, Egypt was the usual assylum in such straits: But Isaac is forbid to use the means that promised relief for his relief in this distress, and commanded to rely on those of God's providing and appointment. Another reason may be, the divine condescension to the mildness of this patriarch's temper. Though the plenty of Egypt might be sufficient to supply the necessities of his family; yet the snares of a court, especially such as that of Egypt, were ready to entangle his soul on the one hand; while he was little able to bear the Egyptian reproaches on the other. Whether Isaac had met with a kind reception, at the court of Egypt, or not he was not without danger: But divine providence planned out his peregrinations in another country. In one word, Isaac was not sent to Egypt, as the time for trying Abraham's seed in the iron furnace was not yet come. Their sojourning in a land not their's must precede their affliction; and many events must take place before their affliction begins.— Again, The patriarch was enjoined to sojourn in the land that God would shew him. This command is expressed in terms nearly similar to that which was tendered to Abraham at his call. Like his father, he must resign himself entirely to divine sovereignty, convinced that they cannot wander whom the Lord conducts though

though they neither know the dangers of the way, nor the means of escaping them.—In the next place, He was commanded to sojourn in the land of the Philistines. These were afterwards used by God as the rod of correction for his people Israel; and, like them, their ancestor sinned by reason of his connection with them, and was chastised by them in like manner.

FOURTHLY, I shall now consider the Occasions of this Covenant. It obtained sometime after the death of Abraham; but how long a space intervened between his death and this covenant is not easily ascertained. Some conjecture, that the interval was no less than eighteen years, while others do not grant more than twelve. The events which obtained, however, in these years, rather deserve our attention, than a calculation of the years themselves. The following seem to have a principal claim to our attention.

1. ABRAHAM, the father of the covenanting family, was now removed by death. This event took place about fifty years after he had given proof of his faith, and resignation to the will of God, by his readiness to offer up his son Isaac; and the covenant-renovation which followed it. Covenant-renovation was extremely necessary at this time, to shew that God's covenant-relation to the militant church does not

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expire

expire with the death of the most eminent of her members.—Besides Abraham, there has been also much death among the rest of the covenanters, and eminent patriarchs: For Shem, a notable covenanter, died twenty years before Abraham; and Heber, a person of distinguished godliness, died four years after Shem; but God still lives.

2. GOD had blessed Isaac after the death of his father; and one blessing from his bountiful hand secures another in the time of need. The blessing bestowed on such a mournful occasion, also laid Isaac under ties of gratitude to renew his covenant with God, when called to that duty.

3. ISAAC had been tried, as was Abraham, with the want of children; and graciously delivered from this trial, as the answer of prayer. Now, this prayer-hearing, and covenant-keeping God laid Isaac under additional obligations to the duty of self-dedication, this fresh proof of his veracity and confidence. As the answer of this prayer was a remarkable step towards the accomplishment of covenant promises on the part of God; so it was an evident call unto covenant-renewal on the part of Isaac.

4. ONE of the immediate occasions of this transaction was a famine, which God had sent

on the land of Canaan: "And there was a famine in that land, besides the first famine, in the days of Abraham.—And the Lord appeared unto him." A visit from God must have been extremely acceptable at such a time. His pinching want seems also to have been blessed to him, in pressing him nearer the Lord. The promises of this covenant were also a staff for his faith, when God threatened to break the staff of bread.

LASTLY, This covenant-renovation was granted as a gracious reward unto the faith and obedience of Abraham: "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws*." It needs not be always repeated, though it ought never to be forgotten, that this obedience did not merit that covenant; but that the covenant was the effect of free and sovereign grace. Abraham's obedience is described by the rule of it;—the voice of God,—his charge,—his statutes,—commandments, and laws. God's VOICE, and his CHARGE, respect the same thing; namely, the general rule of obedience; but the diversity of expression may be accounted for thus, his voice may denote the manner of revealing his will; his charge the authority which he interposeth to bind the conscience to obedience. His institutions being a

* Gen. xxvi. 5.

sacred trust, for which they are accountable who are entrusted with them. The various kinds of precepts, which constituted this charge, are either **COMMANDMENTS** *, by which I understand rules which he gave unto the patriarch for the government of his family. Abraham kept these himself, and communicated them, with faithfulness, to his children, and God testifieth of him: "I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." This standard of domestic rule seems to have been the judicial law in miniature.—Or his **STATUTES** †: This term, when it stands in connection with laws, as in this text, imports ceremonial institutions; such as have no goodness in them but what ariseth from their institution.—Another species of precepts, which constituted this charge, are styled his **LAW**s —

* מצותי. Grotius and Gherard imagine it imports such laws as are of natural, universal, and perpetual obligation, in opposition to such as are merely arbitrary, and temporary. But the Scripture use of both the term and its root determines it to signify such constitutions as are political, in families and commonwealths. Stock. apud vocem.

† חוקתי. "The institutions of ceremonial worship are most commonly expressed by the name of חוקים (a word of the same derivation with that in the text before us) The whole system whereof is termed the Ceremonial Law." Dr OWEN on the Heb. Exercit. Vol. I. p. 275.

‡ תורתו signifies a DOCTRINE as well as a CONSTITUTION, LAW, or system of laws: Such is its extensive import. The connection, however, seems to limit it in this place unto precepts of morality.

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The original word is of extensive signification; and, when it is classed with statutes, &c. as in the case before us, it is expressive of moral precepts. Now, the connection between Abraham's obedience and Isaac's privileges may be expressed to the following purpose: "seeing **thy** father received the system I gave him with **thankfulness**, and kept it with fidelity himself, **as** well as transmitted it to his seed after him, **in** their generations,—it is fit his seed should **declare** their personal acceptance of it, and **their** resolution to keep it with purity, and **transmit** it with fidelity to the ages to come. **It** is also agreeable to the covenant I made with Abraham and his seed, to shew mercy unto thousands of them who love me and keep my commandments, as a gracious reward for their obedience."

INATTENTION to this connection made Dr Gill imagine there was something a-wanting in the original text; but, from this sketch, it is plain the text itself is perfect, and the sense every way complete.

I SHALL now subjoin a REFLECTION or two on what hath been observed.

1. WE may learn God's sympathy towards his people in all their trials. He did not suffer Isaac to be tried with famine without the comfort of the renovation of the promise. He did not

his grace, carry them through the g
difficulty.

2. THE season of divine manifestat
the one hand, and solemn engagements
other, should be carefully observed, an
ably improved. The beauty of both pri
and duties takes rise from the season of
And there is no one thing at which the
of mankind so much aims, as to make
make light of the season of both: As the
gives the keenest chace unto the vessel
is most richly laden. Let every one t
knowledge, that both divine favours a
ties are most beautiful in God's season.

DISSERTATION IV.

ON JACOB'S COVENANT.

GEN. xxviii. 12—15. 18—22.

IN surveying this Transaction, I shall—I. Consider the Character of the Parties Covenanting.—II. The Parts of the Covenant.—III. The Rites of Confirmation.—IV. The Occasions.—Then conclude with an Inference or two from what is proposed.

FIRST, I shall consider the Character of the PARTIES Covenanting.

1. **THE** chief party in this transaction is the Great God our Saviour. He revealed himself to Jacob, at this time, in the following manner: "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac*." This decla-

* Gen. xxviii. 13.

ration

conciled God, in covenant throu
Were such an intimation made to n
day, they would readily reply, the
thing to do with the God of the
nor did they acknowledge their rec
privileges, or the obligation of an
virtue of the covenant of their fathe
would aver, that they would not b
to the God of their fathers, nor b
nant of their fathers! But that whic
of great abhorrence at this day, v
grace and wisdom of God, of gre
to Jacob at that time. This desc
taught him, as it doth every men
Church still, to consider the Angel
venant as the Eternal Jehovah. "A
gel of God spake unto me in a dre
Jacob, and I said, Here am I. A
I am the God of Bethel, where t
edst the pillar, and where thou v
vow." This message was too impo
trusted to any inferior angel, and
too sublime to be conferred on any
Great God. The majesty of Deity
patriarch with profound awe and
The meekness of the Mediator did

holy confidence and cheerfulness in dealing with him.

2. THE other party in this covenant is Jacob, the younger son of Isaac. As there was a separation of Isaac from Ishmael, so there was a separation of Jacob from Esau, in this transaction; though the former was the younger, and the latter the first-born. There was not only an inward and eternal separation in the purpose of God; but also an outward separation, by the dispensation of God's covenant. There was a struggle between these two persons even before they were born, being twins; which continued through the various succeeding periods of their life: The younger took the first-born by the heel in their mother's womb, and afterwards tripped up his heels, by the purchase of his birth-right, while they were yet young; and likewise obtained the patriarchal blessing before his father's death.— Jacob obtained, from the impartial judge, the character of a PLAIN MAN; yet he was guilty of most egregious deceit, in some parts of his conduct. Sovereign grace must be glorified in delivering him, as well as others, from inbred guile. This patriarch was also more severely tried than any of his ancestors, in respect of the number of his trials at least; but they were all necessary to chastise his deceit on the one hand, and to display the strength of divine grace, in supporting him under them,

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on

on the other. His trials, and his triumphs in like manner, prefigured the humiliation and exaltation of the Messiah*; as well as the affliction and deliverances of his mystical body. Though it is plain, from many places of Scripture, that Jacob sustained a typical character; yet it is equally certain he was a genuine believer, and a real saint. Some lines of his character, which are for our imitation will be afterwards considered.—This patriarch, in one word, was favoured with a more numerous progeny than both his predecessors. And none of his children, like some of theirs, were cast out of God's covenant. The whole of his sons became heads of distinguished families in the Church of God. The promise made then, unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, received an ample accomplishment in the latter, to the literal import of it; as it respected the multiplication of their seed: And the members of both the Old and New Testament Church are called by his name, and reckoned to his spiritual offspring; as well as unto the family of Abraham. The former is the father of the praying and wrestling, as the latter is of the believing family; and, strictly speaking, both are one: For the prayer of God's children is the prayer of faith.

* The Gospel meaning of this type is explained Wirt. Oecon. Fœd. Lib. IV. cap. iii. § 24—26. Matt. p. 103.

SECONDLY, I shall next consider the **PARTS** of this Covenant, which are, gracious promises on the part of God, and solemn vows on the part of Jacob.

ON the part of the **SON** of **GOD**, he promises,

1. **THE** land of Canaan: "The land where thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." But as this promise has occurred already, I shall not repeat what has been observed on it.

2. **THE** Son of God assured him of a numerous seed: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the east, and to the west; to the north and to the south." Now Jacob was on a journey from his father's house, without so much as either companion or offspring; but, as he carried the blessing along with him, so the promise secured him of a numerous seed to enjoy it. This same promise had been made to Abraham nearly at the same place at which it is now made to Jacob. And it respected both the literal and mystical seed: The increase of the former being a figure of that of the latter, especially in gospel days.

3. **GOD** promised to make his seed a blessing: "And in thee, and in thy Seed shall all

4. THE Son of God belloyed on his promise of his special and gracious presence. "Behold I am with thee †" Jacob was, at that time, in a very solitary condition, being banished from his father's house, because of the jealousy of his brother: But the compassionate Redeemer assured him, that he was not secluded from the gracious presence of God. The like promise had also been made unto his father Isaac,

5. UNTO the renovation of these promises the Son of God added three others, which were especially necessary unto Jacob in his peculiar circumstances. First, He assured him of protection: "And I will keep thee in all thy places whither thou goest †." He had no need to protect him from insult or danger; for his father had provided him with any assistance. The armies of heaven, however, are his guards. The perfections of Deity his defence, and the persons of the Godhead his companions.

Thus Christ, through the inhabitation of the Spi-
 -it. The journey between Beer-sheba and
 Padan-aram was long, perhaps not less than
 Four hundred miles; the peregrinations of his
 life still longer: But this promised protection
 extended to the utmost limits, and all inter-
 -vening stages of both; to all places unto
 which providence should call him. Secondly,
He promised to bring him again unto the pro-
 mised land: "And I will bring thee again to
 this land." Jacob was under the disagreeable
 necessity of flying from it, but his exile cannot
 be perpetual. Now, the bringing Jacob into
 this land was a prelude of bringing his seed
 into it, when the cup of the Amorites should
 be full; and also, of bringing Jacob and all
 his spiritual seed into the heavenly country in
 due time. Finally, He assured him of the per-
 formance of all his promises, whether grant-
 ed formerly or at that time unto him: "For
 I will not leave thee until I have done that
 which I have spoken to thee of*." Until does
 not always denote the final period of any thing;
 nor, in this declaration, does it import the ut-
 most limit of the blessing promised; as if Ja-
 cob could have been left after the accomplish-
 ment of the promises: But it secures the divine
 presence as to the time prior to the accomplish-
 ment of them; while it does not exclude, but
 rather secure it for an eternity to follow. This

* Gen. xxviii. 15.

must certainly be included: For it is impossible that all the good promised can be done on this side heaven. This promise, then, may be explained by that declaration made by the Apostle, "I will NEVER leave thee, nor forsake thee." And it gave Jacob reason to say, This God is my God FOR EVER, and EVER; and he will be my guide even unto death.

ON the part of JACOB, this Covenant contained a Solemn Vow. Here I shall endeavour—1. To explain the nature of this solemn part of divine worship.—2. Consider the harmony between the grant of blessings in the promise and Jacob's acceptance of them.—3. Jacob's engagement, contained in this acceptance.

I. I SHALL explain the NATURE of this solemn part of divine worship. This is the first time the term is used by the inspired writer though the thing intended must have been frequently implied in transactions, long prior to this time. A vow may be defined, A SOLEMN PROMISE MADE TO GOD ONLY, BY WHICH WE ENGAGE TO BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. To explain and vindicate this doctrine at large, would require more room than I can allot to it. I shall observe, however, that, under the former economy, vows were of two kinds; whereas there is only one species under the new and better one. Under the first testament persons had

had stated services, and free-will offerings which they dedicated to God: One species of vows respected stated services, or commanded duties; the other free-will offerings. As vows had commanded duties for the matter of them, they are, in some respects, still for our imitation: As they respected voluntary obligations, they expired together with those obligations which formed the subject matter of them*. Jacob's vow was of the mixed kind, and respected such commanded duties and divine promises as had been previously bestowed on the

* To this head belongs the vow of the Nazarite, Numb. vi. throughout; on which consult Leidekker de Republica Heb. Lib. XII. cap. iv. The gospel, contained under this shadow, has also been explained by F. Spanheim, P. Dub. Evangel. Part II. Dub. xcii.; who is followed by Mather on the Types, p. 151—155. It will, perhaps, be said, that Paul seems to have vowed such a vow himself, and allowed the like practice in others, Acts xviii. 18. and xxi. 23, 24, and 26. hence some conclude, that this species of vowing is not peculiar unto the former œconomy. To remove this difficulty, I would observe, That Jewish rituals, though unnecessary, were not absolutely unlawful prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. And Paul might both vow himself and also countenance others in that practice, in the space of time between the ascension and the destruction of the Temple: Though, from the epistle to the Hebrews, it is plain they were announced unlawful after that period. The vanity of monkish vows, in imitation of the Nazarites, has been exposed by Spanheim, already quoted.—To this, also, belongs the dedication of Land, &c. mentioned Levit. xxvii. See Ainsworth's annotations on the place. As to the vows reducible into this class, they were merely

the Church : While it serves to instruct her still to vow an adherence unto the divine system which belongs to her peculiar state.

II. We may consider the harmony between the exhibition of the divine promises and Jacob's acceptance of them. Did God say, "Behold I am with thee?" Jacob echoed, "Surely God shall be with me."—Did God declare "I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest?" Jacob's response was, "Surely God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go."—Did the Son of God secure unto Jacob the divine blessing on the fatness of the earth? Jacob avowed his assured persuasion to supply at God's hand.—Did God announce his intention to bring Jacob again into this land? Well might Jacob solemnly profess his assurance of being brought back again. Jacob's avowal of God, as his God, was founded on the covenant character of the Son of God; and the promise of the presence of God, already explained. His resolutions to build an altar, and dedicate part of his substance unto the Lord

ly arbitrary prior to the making of them; but, when once made, they became of inviolable obligation. No one thing can be more imaginary than to suppose, that the friends of Covenanting, in New Testament times, plead this class of vows as a pattern. Covenanting in gospel days has moral obedience for the matter of it; and the heavenly mandate, VOW AND PAY, transfers this duty from the class of indifferencies; or, rather demonstrates that it never belonged unto them.

were also founded on divine grants: The former on the promise of being brought back again unto his own country; and the latter on the promise of temporal blessings, which figured out those which are spiritual and eternal. Though he was, at that time, so poor as to pass over Jordan with his staff only; yet he did not despair but God would give him abundance; and it was fit he should acknowledge that he held all his wealth by the tenor of a divine gift, by paying the tenth, as a quit-rent unto his gracious benefactor*.

III. I SHALL now consider Jacob's Engagement, contained in this acceptance of the divine promise. It will be remembered, that I take the acceptance of God's covenant, with a resolution to abide by it, to be the same as vowing, or covenanting. In the transactions already considered, the divine grant is expressed, and the rule of obedience either implied or declared, as God saw meet; while the Church's engagements unto duties is likewise either asserted or implied in the sacred narrative. In none of them, however, is the form of the vow recorded, except in this one. The former covenants were certainly mutual, and each implied an engagement or a vow: But this exhibits a more perfect pattern, as the vow is formally expressed,—expressed in the very form and

* Compare Gen. xxviii. 12—15. with verse 18—22.

terms in which it was made. I shall first translate the Sacred text containing these terms which may be rendered thus: "Surely I will be with me, and keep me in this way I go; and will give me bread to eat and ment, to put on. And (surely) I shall return my father's house in peace: and the Lord be my God. And (surely) this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that thou shalt give me, in tith I will tithe it for thee *." The scope of t

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* Gen. xxviii. 18—22. Nothing is requisite to validate the translation I have offered; but to ascertain the meaning of a term or two, which has been given different from our translation. The first is the adverb which I have rendered SURELY. There are abundance of places in which it is so rendered, even in our version, E. G. Psal. cxxxix. 19. Prov. iii. 34. xxii Eccle. x. 11. Isa. xxix 16. The learned Stockius enumerates the various significations of this particle; proves, by examples, that (inter alia) it denotes VERBA AFFIRMANDI certe, profecto, for which he quotes Job xvii 16. xlii. 8. In both texts, our translators impaired the sense, and destroyed the emphasis: In the first of them they supplied OUR. The true translation is, "SURELY they shall be laid together in the dust." SCHULTENS, that treasury of oriental learning confirms this sense of the term: See his Index of Hebrew words subjoined to his Comment on Job, "EN PROPOSITIO-assertionibus." NOLDIUS assigns this sense to it like Concordant. Heb. Par. apud vocem. et annot. No. KOERRERUS hits the idea still more accurately, per "Proprie igitur EN notat propositionem, positum &c, Gen. xxiii. 13. Is. i. 18. sit positio (positio) pe vestra sunt sicut dibaphum, instar nivi tamen exalbat." Lex. Heb. Particul. The sense is much the same, in wh

verses seems to be as if Jacob had said, "I am verily persuaded, that the God of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, hath admitted me to the most intimate fellowship with himself; and will preserve me by his special grace and watchful providence, in all the various difficulties and dangers of my way; and will supply me with the necessaries of life while I am an exile from my native land: And I am assured, that he will bring me again to my father's house, as a prelude of his bringing me into the house not made with hands at the last; he will continue to be my God for ever and ever. And I am equally certain, that this stone, which I have set up as a memorial of this visit, will, at my return, be dedicated for an altar unto my God: And, as he will multiply to bless me with worldly substance; so will I devote that

whether we translate it SURELY OR SEEING: But the impropriety of rendering it IF is obvious at first sight; it would make the patriarch's engagement uncertain and precarious; whereas it is plain he was past all peradventure. This impropriety has been observed and obviated by JONIUS and TREMELLIUS, the Tigurine Translators, Ainsworth, as well as Dr Gill; the Rev. Messrs Moncrieff and Boston, and also Messrs Morison and Hall.—The other variation from our translation is in the conjunctive *et*. In verse 21. our translation renders *so that*. And some critics seem to coincide with it, when the particle connects the consequence with the antecedent. But, after all, I apprehend that the same particle ought always to have an identical signification, unless there be an absolute necessity for changing it, which by no means exists in the present case.

portion of it to him which he hath appointed."

It may be further observed, That, as Jacob took up the covenant of the patriarchs by his covenanting with the God of Abraham and Isaac; so he acknowledged the previous obligations unto duty, under which he had been brought in their loins. Hence he was bound to perform all those duties which were incumbent on the patriarchs; even although they are not mentioned in this transaction. He was bound, for example, to walk before God and to be perfect, as well as Abraham; and to circumcise his seed in like manner. Accordingly, his sons were certainly circumcised, seeing they refused to give their sister to the uncircumcised.

THIRDLY, I shall attend unto the SOLEMNITIES by which this Covenant was ratified and they are, A Solemn Appearance on the part of the Son of God, and a Sacred Monument set up by Jacob.

I. THE sacred historian records this appearance in the following terms: "And behold, ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached unto heaven: and behold, the angel of God ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and

the God of Isaac *." I shall, at once, dismiss the various opinions which have been embraced concerning this ladder, whether Jewish or Christian. To me it appears, that it is meant to represent the mediatory person of our Lord Jesus Christ, he being both God and man; and the analogy is obvious in various things. Yea, the great Prophet of the Church himself affords us a key for the proper understanding of it: "Hereafter, ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man †."—The EXTREMITIES of

* Gen. xxviii. 12. 13.

† John i. 51. "Jacob saw a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reaching unto heaven: This ladder was an emblem of Christ, who is called "the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6. And he is the mediator between God and man, through whom we approach unto God. Christ, the Son of God, like Jacob's ladder, was set upon the earth in his incarnation, and birth at Bethlehem; and the top of it reached to heaven in his deity and divine nature. Thus, when he was upon the earth, he affirmed of himself, that he was likewise in heaven: "No man hath ascended to heaven, but the Son of Man, who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven." The ladder, with the foot of it upon the earth, and the top of it in heaven at the same time, was an emblem of Christ in his person, God-man, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heaven and earth are brought together through Christ's mediation: And there is an union, by him, between God and man; an union of peace and reconciliation, an union of friendship, an union of end and design. And, through him, there is a blessed intercourse and communion between heaven and earth; for, through him, by one Spirit, we have access to the Father, and come

of this ladder exhibited the two natures of our Redeemer, the divine and human: These extremes meet in his mediatorial person. The foot of the ladder figured out his humanity spring of the seed of Jacob; and the top of his divinity, which is with the Father in heaven. Thus, the days-man was fit to lay his hand upon both the parties, between whom he mediated, even God and man, as he partook of the nature of both and was allied to each — The position of this ladder points out the divine condescension of both the Father and the Son: IT WAS SET UPON THE EARTH.

come to God the judge of all; and, through him, believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God and we have boldness to enter into the holiest of all the blood of Jesus, through the new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil of flesh. This ladder is fixed fast in the earth in his satisfaction on the cross, in his death, and deep humiliation; and the top of it is fixed fast in heaven in his exaltation, ascension, and intercession within the veil. And it is a way, and a ladder, for the inhabitants of the earth. The foot of it is not set in hell for the fallen angels; no, there is a great and unpassable gulf betwixt heaven and that place of separation from God: But the foot of it is set upon the earth for the sons of men; and every man, young and old, who hears this everlasting gospel is invited, called, and warranted to come, through Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no cherubim, nor flaming sword to obstruct your access; but the Spirit and the Bride say, come; and let him that heareth say come; and whosoever will, let him come and take the Water of Life freely." MONCRIEF Works, Vol. I. p. 177, 178.

the Father had not sent, and if the Son had not come all our length, none of all the guilty family could ever have mounted up to heaven—they could never rise one step heaven-ward of themselves. Its position is also expressive of the sovereignty of divine grace: The foot of it is not set in hell, for the relief of fallen angels; for, verily, he took not on him the nature of angels.—The unity, extent, and perfection of this ladder, represent the union of the mediator's person, the extent of his mediation, and the perfection of his righteousness. The top and foot of this ladder made only one; and the divine and human natures constitute but one person. By the work accomplished in consequence of this union, God and man, who were at variance, are made one. Nor is there any necessity to add the righteousness of any mere creature unto Christ's satisfaction, as another step to this wonderful ladder: Truly, no; God can now come unto us, in the fullest consistency with his holiness; and man may draw near to God, in the fullest assurance of faith: Through him we both have an access, by one Spirit, unto the Father.—The use of this ladder: This ladder exhibits the ministry of angels to the heirs of salvation: BEHOLD THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON IT! Through Christ they ascend, to account for their ministrations, and to receive instructions: They descend to discharge their trust in the service of the militant Church.

Church. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about him, who fear him. V though Esau come against Jacob with hundred men, if he is surrounded with C
HOSTS?

It has been objected against the application of this ladder to Christ, to the following purport: "the Lord who stood above the ladder is the Angel of the Covenant: But absurd to suppose the Son of God stood at the ladder, and yet was, at the same time presented by it *." It may be replied, There is no impropriety in the Mediator's general symbolical representations of himself; for undeniably certain, that Christ gave the order of ceremonies to Moses; and equally certain, that the ceremonies prefigured their author. Now, If he might institute types of himself, why might he not make a symbolical representation of himself upon the minds of the patriarchs in like manner †.

2. THE other Solemnity for confirmation of this covenant, is, the monument which was erected to perpetuate the memory of it. Moses, "And Jacob took a stone, that he put for his pillow, and set it up for a monument."

* Pet. du Bosc. Append. iii. ad vitam ejus, Ed. Amsterdam. 1694.

† For a further solution of this difficulty, vide Meletemata Leiden. p. 255, 256.

and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of the place BETHEL."—— He took the stone which he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar. There is a manifest difference between setting up a stone as a statue to be worshipped, and as a memorial of past transactions. The former is expressly prohibited *; the latter practised with divine approbation †. The stone which Jacob set up was for commemoration and oblation. By it he meant to commemorate not only his hardship, which, compared with his deliverance, could not fail to inspire with gratitude; but also God's gracious promise on the one hand, and his solemn vow on the other. This pillar was also erected for an altar unto the Lord; and a drink-offering was, probably, offered on it at this time, as were, perhaps, burnt-offerings; but, certainly, drink-offerings afterwards: "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where God talked with him, even a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon ‡." The stone which Jacob set up then was a figure of Jesus Christ, the precious stone—the New Testament altar.—He poured oil on the top of it. This rule will be better understood by comparing it with the consecration of the altar of burnt-offering: "It shall be an anoint-

* Levit. xxvi. 1.

† Josh. iv. 2—9. xxiv. 26.

‡ Gen. xxxv. 14.

man, who was tarred and set apart
this purpose, by the anointing of the
Ghost above measure.

3. JACOB, as a further proof of his
title, changed the name of the place.
called the name of the place BETHEL:
is, 'The House of God.' Formerly God's
fence was in the house of Isaac, and th
continued still: But Jacob is now an exile
that house. Fellowship and communion
the living God, however, makes any pla
house of God, and the gate of heaven.

FOURTHLY, It was proposed in th
place, to consider the OCCASIONS of th
venant.

1. IT was made after Isaac, like his
Abraham, had dissembled, if not denied
marriage. The fear of man was a fear
both. And as covenant-renovation was
dered necessary by the fall of the form
also by that of the latter.

* Exod. xxx. 25—28. Vide Walther.. Harmon
blic. p. 150.

2. JACOB had, by fraudulent means, obtained Esau's birth-right. Here it might be enquired,—1. What are the prerogatives of primogeniture?—And, 2. How far Jacob obtained them by unlawful means?

I. WHAT were the prerogatives of primogeniture among the Israelites? And, first, From the destruction of Egypt's first-born, unto the institution of the Aaronical priesthood, the priest's office was a prerogative of it. Some Christian divines, in compliance with the Rabbins, reckon that the priesthood belonged always unto the dignity of the first-born; but, from the beginning, it was not so. The first-born of Israel were consecrated to God immediately after they came out of Egypt; and were, probably, styled Priests * prior to the giving of the law; as they were, certainly, exchanged for the Levites to fill that office afterwards †. But it does not appear that the priesthood was any part of the prerogative which Esau sold at this time. Secondly, A double portion of the paternal inheritance was likewise a prerogative of the first-born in Israel: Hence, when Jacob took the right of primogeniture from Reuben, he gave the inheritance to Joseph. In the case before us, the inheritance which Abraham and Isaac enjoyed was nothing more than a small parcel

* Exod. xix. 22.

† Numb. iii. throughout.

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suitably improved. Jacob not only
but also set up a memorial of his vow
God afterwards renewed his Bethel visit
Bethel promises, on the one hand ; while
remembered, and fulfilled his engagements
the other. The vows of many, alas ! are
gotten almost as soon as they are made
where the Spirit brings them to remember
their salutary fruits will be found manifest
hence.

DIS

DISSERTATION V.

ON THE SINAI COVENANT.

P A R T I.

E X O D. xix. ——— xxiv. 8.

AS this is one of the most stupendous and august scenes that was ever opened on the stage of this world, we have much need to exercise an humble dependence on the Father of Lights, when we contemplate it. It is not our purpose to examine the various hypotheses which have been invented on this subject; nor exhibit the foundations on which they have been established, other than the consideration of these things may be requisite for the declaration and confirmation of the Truth.

THAT we may avoid that which has been so fatal to others, we shall,—I. Shew who are the

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Parties

that promise, as they ought, and from putting Isaac in mind of it, when he shewed a partial fondness for Esau, that they betook themselves unto the arts of fraud and imposture.

5. THIS transaction obtained just after Jacob had escaped the rage of his disappointed brother; and when he was on a hazardous journey unto a fraudulent uncle. As he escaped the first, it became him to be thankful; as he was still exposed to the last, he much needed a fresh proof of God's goodness, to prepare him for it, and support him under it.

6. ONCE more, This covenant obtained one hundred and sixty-two years after the family of his grandfather had been taken into covenant with God, and separated to be the ancestor of the Messiah. Fifty years after the covenant which is the subject of the foregoing dissertation. Near one hundred and forty of those four hundred years, in which the seed of Abraham were afflicted and strangers, had not elapsed: Covenant-renovation was necessary at this time, then, as an encouragement to the afflicted; and also, as Isaac, the head of the covenanting family, was greatly advanced in years, and the vigour of his natural faculties impaired accordingly.

LASTLY,

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LASTLY, I shall conclude this Dissertation with a few **REFLECTIONS** on the whole.

1. **THIS** subject affords a noble directory for explicit and solemn Covenanting. Jacob turned God's promises into holy resolutions, and solemn professions; and he engaged to improve them to all holy obedience. This transaction affords an idea of vowing and covenanting, vastly different from some modern theories of it: It teacheth us to consider this duty as referring unto divine promises, and articles of faith, as well as unto precepts;—as including engagements unto such duties as are necessary and moral, as well as those which were arbitrary and ritual: Whereas, the modern theory seems to confine it to those things which are purely indifferent, or ceremonial. This vow of Jacob's teacheth us, that our engagements should include neither less nor more than God hath promised and enjoined. Nor was a famous Christian Council otherways minded: They enacted, That "no one thing is rightly vowed to God, unless we have received it from his hand; seeing all things which are offered to him are his own free gift *."

2. **SOLEMN** vows should be carefully remembered, that they may be faithfully performed, and

* The Council of Orange, quoted by Calvin, Institut. Lib. IV. cap. xiii. § 3.

suitably

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that it was Christ's voice who shook the ear from Sinai: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: For if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth; much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice shook the earth."

2. THE place in which this glorious perf^{ect} covenanted with Israel was SINAI; or HOREB in Arabia Petrea. Some conceive this mountain had two tops; the one lower, called Horeb; the other higher, called Sinai. Again others think it more probable, that Horeb was the name of the wilderness, and Sinai a mountain which stands in it: They reckon Sinai is expressly said to be the name of the mountain; as when Moses declares, that "mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke:" And, "the Lord came down on mount Sinai." And, for those places where Horeb seems to be styled a mountain, as well as Sinai, the words will bear to be rendered THE MOUNT OF GOD HOREB*: That is, In the wilderness of Horeb. According to this view, Israel abode in the wilderness of Horeb, at the foot of mount

band of the gospel church, claims from his people ward affection and love, and accepts them only to worship him in Spirit and in Truth. In the Mosaic covenant it was otherways!" But this account can not comport with Deut. v. 28, 29.

* Dr Owen's Exercit. Vol. I. p. 270.

nai, while the Law was announced to them from the top of it. Whatever be in these things, the names of the places themselves seem to be significative: **HOREB** denotes **DRY** and **PARCHED**; and this was a parched land indeed,—a land where there was no water. **SINAI** imports a **BUSH**, or **THORNS**: As thorns were the effect of the curse, so it was a fit place for announcing the curse against every presumptuous transgressor. Horeb was the most horrid desert, and Sinai the most rugged mountain in that solitude. Thus, the place added greatly to the horror of the scene.

3. **THE** manner of his appearance was suited to his work, as the Jewish lawgiver. It was expressive of his divine majesty as the Son of God. He was attended with the most splendid retinue: The armies of heaven followed him. Hence, this legislation is styled **THE WORD SPOKEN BY ANGELS**. Angels did not assume the authority of lawgivers, indeed; but were glad to be made the instruments by which the Son of God shewed forth his glory; and waited, with humble cheerfulness, on his service. Both the number and office of the heavenly legions were a signal illustration of his majesty: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai." As they announced the honour of the lawgiver, so they also proclaimed the excellence of the law: Said Paul,

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Paul, "The Law was ORDAINED by angels the hand of a Mediator." And Stephen exactly coincides with him in the same sentiment "Who received the law by the disposition of angels *." The ministry of these glorious spirits is expressed in both texts, in the origin by one and the same term. It is not meant of a magisterial ordination: for it cannot consist with the legislative authority, and peculiar Lordship of the Great God, to suppose that he divided it, even with angels of the highest order. So far as I can judge, it seems to denote their instrumentality in raising the fire and the smoke, and the sound of the trumpet. Soon also conceive, they formed the articulate voice by which the ten commandments were conveyed to the ears of the people. But the voice which pronounced the words of the Law was certainly the voice of God himself: "God spake all these words saying," &c. The inferior orders of creatures acknowledged, in this manner, his dreadful majesty and glory. Hence when sacred writers would represent the glory of the Deity, in the most lofty strains, they borrow their colouring from this august appearance †. Oftner than once has the Psalmist

* Gal. iii. 19, and Acts vii. 53.

† "Ejusdem est cum superioribus generis, is quæ
"his locis communibus postremum afferam, Dei in
"tem Sinam Descensus. Ubi describitur Adventus

that power which moved the inanimate creation on that grand occasion, in the most sublime measures: "Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills moved, and were shaken."—"There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: and coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed; hail stones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire *." Again, the same royal inspired pen delineates this august scene in the following terms: "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah: The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Is-

"ad exercendum Judicium; ad liberandos pios, ad excidendos hostes, vel potentia Dei quocunque modo sese exhibens; ex angusto illo horribilique Sinæ apparatu scena in instruitur. His nihil frequentius, nihil grandius," LOWTH (the present Bishop of London) de Sacra poesi Heb. edit. alt. 1762. p. 110.

* Psal. xviii. 7—13.

rael*.” Once more, “When Israel went out of Egypt.”—“The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. Whailed you, O ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs. Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob† To these we may subjoin Habakkuk’s sketch of this appearance: “His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.” “His brightness was as the light;”—“the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.—“The mountains saw thee, and they trembled‡.” Paul draws a prose description of the scene far superior, in simplicity and grandeur unto the loftiest strains of heathen poetry. “The mount that burned with fire, the blackness of darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words:”—“As so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, exceedingly fear and quake§.” These things are a lively comment on the Mosaic history. “There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud.”—“And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the new part of the mount. And mount Sinai was

* Psal. lxxviii. 7. 8. † Psal. cxiv. 1, 4, 6, 7.

‡ Habak. iii. 3, 4, 6, 10. § Heb. xii. 18. 19. 21

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together on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered *.” How grand the preparation!—

How

* Exod. xix. 16—19. As inspired, so likewise uninspired poets have been obliged to this scene for imagery. Witness Milton and Dr Young:

—————“ Forth rush’d with whirlwind sound
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy’d
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all,
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the show’ry arch,
He, in celestial panoply all arm’d
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended: At his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-wing’d; beside him hung his bow,
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor’d;
And from about him fierce effusion roll’d
Of smoke, and bick’ring flame, and sparkles dire.
Attended with ten thousand thousand fairs,
He onward came; far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen.
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire thron’d,
Illustrious far and wide.”——PARAD. LOST B. VI. l. 750.

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How astonishing the phenomena ! The heavens bow before their maker ! The forky lightnings play around the mountain's towering top ! The flashes of fire pursue each other with inconceivable rapidity ! The thunder claps a more and more ingeminated ! The clangor of the trumpet, the terrible emblem of the archangel's final blast, waxeth louder and louder ! The tremendous note wounds nature's trembling ear ! Heaven groans beneath the dreadful weight ! Earth trembles to its very centre ! Stubborn Sinai quakes to its lowest base ! The blackness of darkness, and mountains of smoke add unto the horror of the day ! Well might Moses exclaim, " I exceedingly fear and quake ! Shall the inanimate creation tremble at the giving of the Law, and shall not sinners tremble at the breaking of it ? Yes, verily ; either filial fear, while here ; or before a judgment-seat, hereafter. In fine, the horror of the former exhibits that of the latter : As the Saviour of God manifested his GLORY at the giving of the law ; so he will appear in his own GLORY

" Loud peals of Thunder give the Sign, and all
Heav'n's terrors in array surround the ball ;
Sharp lightnings with the meteors blaze conspire,
And darted downward set the world on fire ;
Black rising clouds the thicken'd æther choke,
And spiry flames shoot thro' the rolling smoke."

LAST DAY, Book III

and his Father's when he comes to enquire how men have kept it *.

THE other Party is MOSES, and all Israel represented by him. Here I may observe,

1. MOSES stood in the capacity of a representative, or mediator. He was constituted
Israel's

* "Here was the lightning darted in their eyes, the thunders roaring in their ears, the trumpet of God drowning the thunder-claps, the voice of God out-speaking the trumpet of the angel; the cloud enwrapping, the smoke ascending, the fire flaming, the mount trembling, Moses climbing and quaking, paleness and death in the face of Israel, uproar in the elements, and all the glory of heaven turned into terror. In the destruction of the first world; there was clouds without fire: In the destruction of Sodom, there was fire raining without clouds: but here was fire, smoke, clouds, thunder, earthquakes, and whatsoever might work more astonishment, than either was in any vengeance inflicted.—And if the Law were thus given, how shall it be required? If such were the proclamation of God's statutes, what shall the sensations be? I see, and tremble at the resemblance. The trumpet of the angel called unto the one: The voice of an arch-angel, the trumpet of God, shall summon us to the other. To the one, Moses (that climbed up that hill, and alone saw it) says, God came with ten thousand of his saints; in the other, thousand thousands shall minister to him, and ten thousand thousands shall stand before him. In the one, mount Sinai only was in a flame; all the world shall be so in the other: In the one, there was fire, smoke, thunder, and lightning; in the other, a fiery stream shall issue from him, wherewith the heavens shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt away with a noise. O God, how powerful art thou to
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vancement of a covenant already made. Hence, when Moses preached to the congregation of Israel on this covenant, under the infallible direction of the Spirit, he declared the Sinaitic transaction to be a prosecution of the Abrahamic covenant: "Because the Lord loves you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers."—"Know therefore, that the Lord, thy God, he is God: the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations: Thou shalt, therefore, keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which he commandeth thee this day, to do them. Wherefore, it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord, thy God, SHALL KEEP UNTO THEE THE COVENANT, and the mercy, WHICH HE SWORE UNTO THY FATHERS *— I shall only add, That this congregation must be considered as already in covenant with God, as the members of it were circumcised: They must certainly be in covenant with God in point of external privileges at least, who bear the seal of it: That circumcision was a seal of the covenant of their ancestors is evident from the very institution of it: That the people were circumcised is equally certain, from the express testimony of the Holy Ghost: "Al

* Deut. vii. 8, 9. and 11, 12.

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the people that came out of Egypt that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now, all the people that came out were CIRCUMCISED *." Circumcision, though instituted long prior to the giving of the law, bound unto the observation of all the precepts of it; as the circumcised person took the Lord God of Abraham for his God, resigning himself unto his will, as to all that he should enjoin, as well as all that he had already commanded. Hence, said Paul, He that is circumcised is become a debtor to do the whole Law.

3. THE Congregation of Israel stood in the capacity of a visible church, when they renewed their covenant at this time: Hence, they received such ordinances as belonged unto her in a visible state. This visible church has, accordingly, been styled, with great propriety, THE CHURCH OF THE CIRCUMCISION; circumcision being the badge of visible membership in her. Nor does it alter the case, that circumcision was given unto the patriarchal church; for this and the Mosaic one were, materially, one and the same, though she underwent a signal change, as to her form, at Sinai; being changed from a domestic unto a national state. But this change will be no-

* Josh. v. 4, 5.

ticed when we consider the occasions of covenant.

4. THE Church of the Circumcision in one respect, a typical, and, in another respect, a spiritual church. She was a spiritual church, as distinguished from a typical or as much as she made a profession of faith in spiritual promises, and of obedience unto ritual precepts. That the promises and precepts which belonged to her were of this will be afterwards manifested, when we consider the matter of this covenant.——This church was typical of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of the circumcision of her members. The shedding of blood, in that bloody sacrifice, prefigured the shedding of his most precious blood. She was also typical, as she was obliged to celebrate various ordinances, typical of his sacrifice and atonement. Their obligations represented his surety-engagements. Their engagements to provide a sin-offering prefigured his to make his soul an offering for sin. In the antitype, indeed, the priest and the sacrifice were one; but in the type, they were different.——This church was also typical of Christ personal, as she, like him, was called out of Egypt. Hence the oracle, uttered by Hosea, “When Israel was a child, I called my Son out of Egypt*,” had not

* Hof. xi. 1.

retrospect unto Israel's deliverance, prior to his transaction ; but also a prospect as far forward as the days of the Messiah. Accordingly, though Hosea seems to mean this congregation ; yet he also intended the Messiah, as Matthew expressly intimates : " And he was there (viz. in Egypt) until the death of Herod : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son *."

5. AMONG the persons who constituted this visible church there were some who covenanted in a gracious and spiritual manner ; some among the many thousands of Israel were Israelites indeed. It was far otherways with many of them ; but we have reason to believe there were A FEW who devoted themselves to God with all their hearts : Aaron was the saint of God, Caleb and Joshua were men of a spirit opposite to unbelief,—men of a different spirit from the rest of the spies. Though the church was very corrupt in Egypt, yet God reserved unto himself a seed ; and it is reasonable to think, that the sermons, messages, and miracles of Moses were blessed to gather others unto himself, besides those who had been already gathered. I doubt if it be consistent with the faithfulness of God to covenant with

* Matth. ii. 15. Vide Dub. Evangel. SPANHEIM in Loc. cum Hof.

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a people where the promises are effectual upon none of them.

6. MANY who covenanted with God at this time did it only in a carnal and legal manner. Though they were the seed of Jacob in name, yet they were not Israelites indeed: The greater part of the congregation were of this sort. The Spirit of God characterizeth them a stubborn and rebellious generation,—a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God. Their professions of faith and obedience were liberal and ready; but integrity of heart was much wanted. Said the righteous judge, “They have well spoken all that they have said: O that there were such an heart in them.” Many were called at this time, but few chose. Should it be enquired, Wherefore did God covenant with a people the greater part of whom were legal and insincere? It may be answered, So it seemed good in his sight. Two other reasons, however, may be assigned: First, Many real believers were in their loins; and it was agreeable to the will of God, that this generation should enjoy the benefit of a religious education. Accordingly, God so over-ruled matters, that these legal covenanters were the instruments of training up a race better than themselves: “He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which commanded our fathers that they should make the

them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them unto their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments*." Secondly, Both the believing and unbelieving covenanters were previously under an external administration of the Covenant of Grace, and also under federal engagements unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; as they had covenanted with him in the loins of these patriarchs. Now, there was no impropriety in intimating so much unto them, to excite unto obedience, or leave them inexcusable.

SECONDLY, We shall enquire what are the CONTENTS of this Covenant? These are promises, and a system of precepts: And, as to the first, I shall shew,—1. What new promises were made at this time.—2. What renovation of former grants.—3. Enquire if these promises were conditional.

I. I SHALL enquire what New Promises were made unto the Church at this time.

1. GOD said to Israel, "Ye shall be a PECULIAR TREASURE unto me above all people †."

* Psal. lxxviii. 5, 6, 7. † Exod. xix. 5.

This phrase is parallel unto that of the Apostle: "That he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works *." And it cannot import less than such supreme delight as a man hath in his rarest jewels and dearest friends. By reason of the breach of the Covenant of Works, God is angry with the wicked every day, instead of having such delight in fallen man. It is only by the Covenant of Grace that God's love can flow unto him: By it alone he can say, "Jah hath chosen Jacob unto himself, even Israel for his p-

* Tit. ii. 14. The original word is *ἁγιασμοῦ*, a term not used, as far as I know, by any but sacred writers. Stephanus imagines, that the Septuagint translators were the inventors of it. According to CONRADUS KIRCHER they rendered the Hebrew word סגולה by it for four times at least, by *ἁγιασμοῦ*. And the inspired writers of the New Testament have shewed the propriety of that translation, in this instance at least. This is sufficient to set aside that supposition on which many rest, viz. the term imports merely a separation to external privileges. The reader may also consult Wits. de Oecon. Fœd. Lib. III. cap. xii. I shall insert the following sentences as a specimen: "Cui vocabulo affieris est vox latina SIGILLUM
" adeo ut סגולה significat rem quam quis impresso sigillo
" suo, suam esse declarat, et talem quidem, unde ho-
" mines, regesque ipsi divites censentur." Then the author compares the Old and New Testament writers on this subject; and, having considered such words as bear affinity to the same terms in classic Greek authors, he adds,
" Sunt ergo pii eximia Dei possessio, quam sibi vindicat,
" et servat, et qua in se ostentat uti CORONA ORNATA
" ET CIDARI REGIA Jes. 62. 3. quam pro divitiis suis habet
" et alterius esse non patitur: et hoc quoque sensu sanctitas iis ad scribi potest, 1 Pet. ii. 9." Vide § 7.

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cular treasure *." God hath absolute authority over all his creatures, founded on the super-eminent excellence of his nature; and they are his property, as they are the work of his hands: But he acknowledged Israel to be his peculiar people on the foot of distinguishing love and redeeming grace; as well as external salvation from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the red sea: For though all the members of the visible church are not actually possessed of redeeming grace, yet they are so in the judgment of charity.

2. HE dignified them, by making them a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS †. God gave Israel priests after the order of Aaron; but that gift did not supersede this royal priesthood. The priesthood, after the order of Aaron, was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, though a less glorious one than that of Melchisedec. This royal priesthood was distinct from both: It is also common to both œconomies. Hence, said Peter, "But ye are a royal priesthood ‡," unto the members of the Gospel Church; a declaration of the same import with that before us.—Though this priesthood be not typical, or ceremonial, yet it is metaphorical, bearing an allusion unto the typical priesthood. Under the Law, priests were admitted into God's presence in his sanctuary. Accordingly, God's

* Psal. cxxxv. 4. † Exod. xix. 6. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

church and people are said to be NEAR him, or round about him. Genuine covenanters are also styled priests, as they draw near unto God by Jesus Christ, the true altar, to offer unto him the sacrifices of a broken heart,—of prayers and praises,—yea, of their whole persons, soul and body.—They are a kingdom of priests, or a royal priesthood, as endued with a royal disposition. Their spirit far excels that of the world: The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.

3. God promised to take them for “a holy nation*.” All the Jewish nation were, at this time, holy by profession,—holy in respect of circumcision, and all external privileges which belong unto God’s holy Covenant. They had such a measure of external holiness as entitled them to a place in the visible church. But these do not exhaust all the holiness here intended. There were some among them sanctified in heart; and, as the holy seed, however few, was the substance of the congregation, so it took its denomination from them. The Apostle Peter likewise useth a similar term, when addressing New Testament saints. Said he, “Ye are a holy nation.”

4. God engaged to bestow the guidance of his angel, to keep Israel in the way, and bring

* Exod. xix. 6.

them into the place which he had prepared for them *. Though this covenant belongs to the dark œconomy, yet it commenceth with one cluster of promises, and is concluded with another. This is one of the last cluster. The sacred historian remarks the person promised; the purposes for which he is promised; and the importance of the promise.—The person promised is the Angel of the Covenant; and in this he reveals the Father's purpose concerning himself. Some expositors, I acknowledge, are otherways minded, supposing this to be meant of a created angel; and others speak with hesitation. But of which of the created angels said the Father, at any time, "My name is in him?" But it will be said that the Son is the speaker, and the speaker must be distinct from the person spoken of. To this I would answer, As the Son speaks in the name of the Father, so he may, with abundance of propriety, utter the language of the Father concerning himself.—The purpose for which he is promised is, to keep Israel in the way, and bring them into the prepared place. Accordingly, when they journeyed through the waste and howling wilderness, this angel conducted them in the pillar of fire and pillar of cloud: He taught them when to set forward, and when to rest. The end of their journey is denominated the place which he had PREPARED:

* Exod. xxiii. 20.

And their journey was an emblem of that which all believers must make through this world to the prepared city, the place which Christ went to PREPARE for his disciples, when he left this world.—The importance of this promise is evident from the style of wonder in which God himself speaks of it: BEHOLD! I send mine angel, &c. How great!—How Godlike the condescension the Father manifests in sending his Son to dwell in a tabernacle made with hands, as a prelude of his dwelling in a tabernacle made without hands in the fulness of time! Should any enquire, If the Israelites understood this angel to be the Son of God? It may be answered, They did; as appears from their sorrow, when God, provoked by their idolatry, would only grant them a created angel. Said God, “I will send an angel before thee.”—“And when the people heard these evil tidings they mourned*.” The presence of a created angel was consistent enough with his consuming them; but the angel of his presence was sufficient for their preservation.

II. I SHALL enquire what renovation of former grants obtained at this time.

1. God renewed the promise of being a God to Israel, which he had made unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: “God spake all these

* Exod. xxxiii. 2. 4.

words, saying, I am the Lord thy God *." And when he covenanted with Abraham, he engaged to be a God unto him, and unto his seed after him, in their generations †. The full import of this promise is infinitely above the conception and description of creatures. Something has been already offered concerning it; but eternity itself cannot exhaust the happiness contained in it. I shall now enquire, Whether in this covenant, it implies a promise of eternal life? The resolution of this point is sufficient to determine the nature of this transaction †. The shortest way to satisfaction is an immediate submission of the mind and conscience to the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his dispute with the Sadducees he ascertains the import of God's being a God unto a person, assuring us, that the relation which commenceth in the accomplishment of this promise is by no means dissolved by death: "But

* Exod. xx. 2.

† Gen. xvii. 7.

† The Right Reverend Dr Warburton, late Bishop of Gloucester, erects a demonstration of the divine legation of Moses upon this principle (with two others) viz.

"THAT THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE STATE OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN, NOR DID MAKE A PART OF THE MOSAIC DISPENSATION."

—"The demonstration is so strong and beautiful (says his Lordship), at the same time appears to me so easy and simple, that one cannot tell whether the pleasure of the discovery, or the wonder that it is now to make be greater." Divine Leg. Vol. I. p. 557, edit. 4. Good Mr Warburton!

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as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which is spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*." It is observeable, that the declaration which God made unto Moses, from the bush, is considered by Christ as spoken to the Sadducees of that generation in which he lived, as well as unto every generation since. This testimony is that which was spoken UNTO YOU, said Christ. Moreover, the life intended was not merely the duration of existence; but also implied happiness, or well-being. When God assures a soul of this relation, then, he makes it certain of happiness after death, even all that felicity which can accrue from the enjoyment of himself,—all that he hath to bestow: For the life intended is such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob enjoyed when the Son of God appeared to Moses in the bush. Now, What is eternal life? Wherein does the eternal inheritance consist? Does it not consist in the knowledge and enjoyment of the only true God? This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He that HATH the SON HATH LIFE. This promise, then, warranted the church, at that time, to say, this God is our God for ever,

* Matth. xxii. 31, 32.

and he will be our God even unto death. The Lord is my portion, faith my soul *.

2. God renewed the promise of his blessing on the church, and his curse on her enemies :
 “ In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.”—“ I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary

* The methods taken to elude this argument are no contemptible evidence of its force. Some grant that eternal life is contained in this promise; but it is so deeply hid that it could never have been found in it, or deduced from it, but by such a teacher as Jesus Christ. But if it had been impossible to find this blessing in this promise, Christ would never have taxed the Sadducees for finding it in it. When Jesus said unto them, “ Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures,” he did not tax them for not performing impossibilities; but for ignorance of what they might and ought to have known. This pretence has been exposed both by Clopenburg and Witsius. The former, in his Exercit. Theol. Loc. ix. Disp. i. § 6—11. The latter, De Oeconom. Fœd. Lib. III. cap. ii. § 4—15. Bishop Warburton gives another sense of the matter, but, if possible, still more absurd. He reckons the sense I have given founded on mistake: “ A second mistake (says his Lordship) is, that Jesus, by these words, insinuates, that Moses cultivated the doctrine of a resurrection, or a future state. But here the objectors seem to forget against whom the argument is addressed, the Sadducees. Now, these did not hold, that Moses did not teach; but that he did not believe that doctrine. This was the error Jesus aimed to confute, and only this; because the opinion that Moses did not teach, or cultivate it, was no error at all; as appears, among other reasons, even from hence, That the Jews might reasonably understand

versary unto thine adversaries *." This promise seems to me to be a renovation of one of the promises made to Abraham : " And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee †." True it is, indeed, one special blessing is intended ; namely, God's gracious presence in his ordinances ; but as divine ordinances are the channels through which God imparts all his blessings

* Exod. xx. 24. compared with xxiii. 22. † This promise is explained, Dissertation II. p. 116—119.

stand the title of the God of Abraham, &c. to mean the peculiar tutelar God of Abraham's family ; for the terms Jacob and Israel are frequently used in the Scriptures for the whole nation of the Jews, Aaron for the whole order of the priesthood, &c. And as, in reason, they might, so, by the history of the early Jews, in fact, we find they did understand it in this sense." Vol. V. p. 161—165. edit. ut supra. But how does it appear, that ever it was either reasonable or religious to understand God's being a God unto a person, merely of his being the tutelary Deity of the nation in which he lives ? The doctrine of tutelar Deities originated in the darkness of paganism ; and was part of the depths of Satan, by which he tyrannized over the consciences of men. The Church of Rome took the hint from the heathen philosophers, and introduced the doctrine of tutelar angels in its stead. But the Churches of the Reformation justly reprobated these fond imaginations ; and the reasons on which they proceeded are more than sufficient to prove the unreasonableness of the doctrine specified, Vide Turret. Loc. vii. Q. 8. Moreover, I might observe, that the difference between Bishop Warburton and the Sadducees, on this head, is, the Bishop maintains, Moses did not TEACH ; the Sadducees, Moses did not BELIEVE the doctrine of a future state. Accordingly, the Bishop gives out, that it was no error at all to maintain, that Moses did not teach,

sings to his people, we may justly conclude, that all spiritual blessings are intended. The promise of God's being an enemy unto his people's enemies, was also a renovation of the first promise; and, as it had been engrossed in the Abrahamic covenant, so likewise in this one; so that the whole fabric might be regularly advanced, and no part of it omitted, or superseded by future grants. As to the promise of God's being an adversary unto his people's adversaries, it is readily granted that the nations of Canaan are mentioned in the context; but these were typical of spiritual foes: And there is nothing in the promise to bear down the sense of it merely to the type. If the original text be carefully examined, it will be found to coincide with other promises, which are confessedly of more extensive import*.

3. AT this time God also saw meet to renew the promise of the Messiah, giving a pre-

or cultivate that doctrine: Hence, if this observation be to the purpose, he meant to conclude, that our Saviour did not argue from what Moses TAUGHT, but from what he BELIEVED. The very reverse is the truth, however; for Christ argued expressly from what Moses taught by the Scriptures which he wrote, without a syllable about what constituted his personal belief.

* The original word *וְאֵיבָתִי*, in Exod. xxiii. 22. is the root of *אֵיבָתִי*, in Gen. iii. 15. The sense appears to be the same in both texts, as the former contains the advancement of a work begun in the latter.

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dition of his work, especially his personal ministry: "And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou for us, and we will hear: but let not God speak unto us, lest we die *."—"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken: According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee †." That this promise belongs unto this transaction cannot be disputed, as the inspired historian ascertains even the day on which it was made: That it belongs unto the Messiah is equally certain, from the express application of it unto him in the New Testament. It was upon the foot of this promise, along with others, I presume, that the Jews expected a great teacher to come from God in the days of Christ's personal ministry: And all who waited for the consolation of Israel found that

* Exod. xx. 18. 19. † Dent. xviii. 15—18.

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their expectations were not in vain. Jesus of Nazareth was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. The analogy between Moses and Christ has not escaped the observation of divines in every period of the Christian Church*:

But it is beside our purpose to enlarge upon it.

As this declaration contained a promise of the Messiah, it was a renovation of those promises respecting an extraordinary Seed, which had been made in almost every foregoing transaction: As it delineated his office, it was an additional measure of light which was, at this time, reflected on the promise. The first promise conveyed the idea of the Redeemer as a sacrificing priest: Various after promises represented his regal dignity: But this was the first express declaration of his prophetic character.

This was not the first time Christ had discharged the prophetic office, indeed; for all the appearances which the Son of God made, and all the revelations he had given, belonged unto the discharge of this office.—But it might be enquired, How the oracle is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, seeing a prophet is expressly promised unto them, as raised up UNTO THEM:

“The Lord thy God will raise up UNTO THEE A PROPHET,” &c. To remove this seeming

* Among the ancients, the reader may consult Euseb. Demonstrat. Evangel. if he has opportunity: And among the moderns, Jortin's remarks on Eccles. Hist. Dr Newton on Prophecy, p. 158. &c.

difficulty,

difficulty, the things following merit our attention: First, Christ was raised up in his types, even unto that people. The order of prophets was designed not only for the instruction of that generation in which they lived; but also for a representation of the prophetic office of our Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly, Though the distance of time between the giving of the oracle and the full accomplishment of it was great, yet it was accomplished to the same people (in their seed and successors) unto which it was given. This promise, then, was an additional security, that Israel should be a people until that prophet should be raised. As the sceptre could not depart from Judah until the Shiloh should come; so Israel could not cease from being a people until this prophet should arise: Hence, he came while the typical œconomy lasted: He was a minister of the circumcision. Thirdly, Christ discharged his prophetic office by the special teaching of the Holy Ghost, though he was given with a sparing hand, even unto gracious persons, under that dark œconomy.

4. God renewed the promise of Canaan, with victory over the Canaanites, as well as the prosperous enjoyment of their lands: "Mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off."—"He shall bless thy bread and thy water: and I will take

take sickness away from the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil*." This promise is a renovation of one of these made to Abraham†; therefore, I shall not stay to illustrate it: Only I may observe, that the sacred history, particularly of Joshua, shews how punctually it was accomplished.

III. I SHALL now enquire if these promises were conditional. It has been said, that this transaction cannot be the Covenant of Grace, as the promises of this covenant are absolute; whereas the promises of that transaction were conditional. To examine the justice of this allegation, it may be observed,

I. THE conditions of these promises are promised in other grants, without any condition, or limitation whatsoever: For example, if, in the beginning of this transaction, it be said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure‡," &c. It is also said, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart.—And thou shalt return and OBEY the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I com-

* Exod. xxiii. 23, 25, 26. † Dissert. II. Part 2.

‡ Exod. xix. 5.

mand thee this day *." The truth is, God took them for his peculiar people, that he might enable and excite them to obey by his distinguishing grace; instead of their purchasing his favour by it †. Thus God himself explains it: "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee; and THAT thou shalt keep all his commandments ‡." The condition of the promise belongs unto the law. Now, this method of dispensation taught them to improve the promise of the gospel, as ever they would yield obedience to the law; and to yield obedience to the precepts of the law, as ever they would evidence their interest in the promises of the gospel.

* Deut. xxx. 6, 8.

† Mr Ball expresseth himself, on this subject, in the following terms: "True it is, the promises run upon this condition, If ye obey my voice, and do my commandments: But conditions are of two sorts; antecedent, or consequent. Antecedent, when the condition is the cause of the thing promised, or given; as in all civil contracts of justice, where one thing is given for another: Consequent, when the condition is annexed to the promise, as a qualification in the subject; or an adjunct that must attend the thing promised. And, in this latter sense, obedience to the commandment was a condition of the promise, not a cause why the thing promised was vouchsafed; but a qualification in the person, or a consequence of such a great mercy freely conferred," p. 133. See his Treatise on the Covenant.

‡ Deut. xxvi. 18.

2. THERE were various promises made in this transaction altogether unconditional; such as, "I am the Lord thy God."—"Behold, I send mine angel before thee;" and "A Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto thee of thy brethren." And these absolute promises are given out as motives to obedience. Hence, it appears, that the allegation above specified is not universally true.

3. THE congregation of Israel typified our Lord Jesus Christ in the sense above mentioned: And their obedience also, in some measure, prefigured his mediatorial righteousness. As the ceremonial law was a typical glass bringing near to view that divine righteousness, it taught them to consider his obedience and sufferings as the condition of those conditional grants which were made to them: That being ascribed to the type which could only be done by the antitype. But this brings us to consider the other part of this Covenant, which is,

A SYSTEM OF PRECEPTS, enjoined on these covenanters,—1. I shall make a few observations on these precepts.—2. Express a connected view of both promises and precepts in this transaction, together with Israel's acceptance of God's proposals.—3. Enquire how far the substance of this covenant is of perpetual obligation on the Gospel Church; and how far it was peculiar to the typical œconomy.

I. I SHALL offer a few Observations on this system of precepts.

I. THE Moral Law was the primary rule of that obedience which God required in this Covenant. The judicial and ceremonial laws were mere appendages to it, and reducible unto one or other of the precepts contained in it. That the moral law was the original standard of obedience in this covenant, is evident from God's express declaration; oftener than once does he style it the Covenant: "And he declared to you his COVENANT, which he commanded you to perform, even the TEN COMMANDMENTS: and he wrote them on two tables of stone *." Said Moses, "When I was gone up into the mount, to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you †." The moral precepts were spoken first by God himself unto the people, and he added no more when he spoke them: but took Israel immediately engaged unto them, and unto his will. "All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient." They put a blank into his hand, to be filled up by his sovereignty; and he filled it up by adding the ceremonial and judicial laws, which he delivered to Moses, to be, by him, communicated to the people. The ceremonial institutions were, for the most part, appendages unto the

* Deut. iv. 13. † Deut. ix. 9, 11.

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various precepts of the first table of the moral law; and the judicial law, for the most part, appendages unto second-table precepts. To see this truth exemplified, the reader may consult Calvin on the five books of Moses. It must be remembered, however, that some of the judicial precepts are also appendages of the commandments of the first table *.

2. As the congregation of Israel stood in various capacities, so this system admits of as many distinct considerations, and is perfectly adapted to each of them: First, As Israel stood in the capacity of the Messiah's type, this law was designed to exhibit the measure and extent of his obedience and righteousness. In former federal transactions, God had given ample discoveries of the promissory part of the Covenant of Grace, so that Israel might have some view of their privileges; but their legal hearts were ready to suggest, that these benefits were of easy purchase. This law was necessary, then, to discover the vast extent of the conditional part of the Covenant, and the utter impossibility of their accomplishing it in their own persons. The law was exhibited, at this time, as armed with the curse, that they might know the law-penalty as well as the law-precept. Nor was the exhibition of the law in the form of the Covenant of Works, at all

* Leidekker de Repub. Hebraeor. Lib. V. cap. ix.

improper,

improper, if we consider Israel as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. As he undertook to magnify the law and make it honourable, even from eternity, in his own person; so he likewise engaged, in the person of his ancestor, and by the mouth of the whole congregation, as his type, to implement the law in its fullest extent. Accordingly, he submitted to the law, in the Sinai edition of it, when he fulfilled the condition of the New Covenant. This is frequently taught us by the Apostle. As he was, at this time, constituted under the law, in the person of his ancestor, and by the engagement of his type; so he came forth actually, in the fulness of time, under that very same law: "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made (or CONSTITUTED) under the law, to redeem them who were under the law *." The law of the Covenant of Works was, indeed, a law common to both Jews and Gentiles; but the latter had a far more imperfect edition of it than the former: Therefore, the Apostle takes his measures from the most perfect copy. That the Apostle considers this edition of the law as the standard of the surety righteousness, is evident from the date of it: It was a LAW given FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS after the promise made unto Abraham. Now, this date can agree to no other than the Sinai Transaction †. The Mosaic Law was

* Gal. iv. 4, 5. † Gal. iii. 17.

the only one which expressed its penalty by the cursed death of hanging on a tree; and adjudged sinners to have incurred that curse, by the violation of it. Now, Christ yielded obedience to such a law: "It is written (viz. in the Mosaic Law) CURSED is every one that continueth not in all things WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW to do them."—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree *." It was the Mosaic edition of the law which demanded obedience to it as the condition of life: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them †." Now, Jesus Christ was constituted under that law which required obedience and sufferings as the condition of life, that, by his obedience and death, he might become the author of eternal salvation to them who obey him. But it may be objected, perhaps, That it is improper and absurd to lay a yoke on Israel which was designed only for Jesus Christ,—absurd to demand that obedience from them which was only competent to him alone to yield. To which it may be replied, That it was very proper to intimate the law, under this special consideration, unto them, as they, in their original state, were the proper subjects of it: And if they were de-

* Gal. iii. 10, 13. † Rom. x. 5.

livered from the law-curse, it was an useful lesson for them to look back unto the awful state from which they had been freed. It may also be added, That it is agreeable to the genius of types, to ascribe things unto them which are only true of their antitype: Therefore, it is by no means improper to speak of their obedience as the condition of life, while the obedience of Christ is intended as the substance of that shadow. This is, indeed, the usual style of the Mosaic ritual, especially respecting sacrifice. It may be also observed, That it is equally proper to propose the obedience of one type as the cause of life, as to make promises to other types, which, strictly speaking, can only belong unto the true Messiah: For example, God promised to Abraham, saying, "IN THEE shall all the families of the earth BE BLESSED." Whereas, it is only competent unto Jesus Christ to BLESS men in the sense intended. Various things are likewise promised to David, which in their fullest emphasis, belong only unto him who is both David's Son and David's Lord *. Now, if it was proper to give out promises to the type, which are fulfilled only in the antitype, Why may not precepts be laid on the type, which could only be fulfilled by the antitype likewise? In one word, We may answer, Though the system of precepts demanded obedience, as the condition

* See Psal. lxxxix.

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of life; yet it did not exclude, but enjoin a vicarious satisfaction, in case of failure. As the moral law was broader than their obedience to it, so the ceremonial law was superinduced to point out the plan of divine atonement and acceptance. The demands of the moral law were so broad, as to shut them out from all hopes of attaining life and salvation by their own obedience; but it did not shut them up from seeking salvation by the obedience of another. The ceremonial law, which was an appendage of the moral, taught the person, who presented his sacrifice before God, to lay his hand upon the head of the sacrifice, as an emblematical representation of transferring the guilt from the sinner to the surety: "And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sacrifice*," &c. Secondly, As the congregation of Israel may be considered as made up of persons either unregenerated or regenerated by the grace of God. In the latter view, it was proper to intimate the law to them even as a covenant of works, to shew them how much they were indebted to Christ in fulfilling the law in their stead. In the former view, it taught them the danger of their present state, and the necessity of betaking themselves to a mediator; and it appears to have had the desired effect upon some of them †. Third-

* Levit. iii. 2.

† Exod. xx. 18—23. compared with Dent. xviii—18.

ly, As the congregation of Israel stood in the capacity of a visible church, this system of precepts was the rule of their social worship, and even of their personal obedience. That this system demanded social worship,—that it was the standard of external obedience, is universally granted: That it required private and personal obedience is equally certain from the very form of the precepts themselves. They run in the singular number, intimating, that they were directed to individuals: “THOU shalt have no other gods before me. THOU shalt not make unto thee any graven image.” —“THOU shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,” &c. “THOU shalt not commit adultery.” And such is the spiritual nature of the divine law, that it binds every one in the inward man, as well as the outward: The Pharisees thought otherways indeed; but Christ spent two sermons to detect their mistake*. The sum of our duty is love; and God commanded Israel to love him with all their HEART; while he prohibited them from hating their brethren IN THEIR HEART †.

3. As the moral law bound them to observe both ceremonial and judicial precepts; so ceremonials regulated Israel in her ecclesiastical

* His sermon on the mount, and his sermon on the plain.

† Levit. xix. 17.

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ity, as a typical church; and judicials, vil policy, as a nation under a theocratical government. Under the Mosaic economy, was a greater affinity between the church and the state, indeed, than under the Christian dispensation; yet they were perfectly distinct, and distinct laws accordingly*. The end which the seed of Abraham were separated as a typical church has been declared on the Abrahamic Covenant. Now, God saw fit to appoint a theocratical government in Israel, as the best means of preserving that religion in which he had placed them. Because we attribute too much to this form of polity, and others too little, it might not be unreasonable to spend a moment in the consideration of it †. In a theocracy, then, Jehovah,

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* Locke is pleased to set aside the distinction of Mosaic Law into moral, ceremonial, and judicial, in the following manner: "There is nothing more frivolous than that common distinction of the moral, ceremonial, and judicial law, which men ordinarily make." Letter on Toleration, p. 123. But as this distinction is founded in the nature of things; and as different names are given to each of these laws by God himself, we need not, and ought not indeed, to be swayed by human authority, however great.

The word *θεοκρατία*, formed by Josephus from *θεος* DEUS and *κράτος* impero, very happily expresseth that peculiar government which God exercised over Israel, JENNING'S Antiq. Vol. I. p. 20. Some consider the Jewish Church and the Jewish State as of the same extent, or they suppose they find only a State-church; or,

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perhaps,

by himself, prescribes laws by which the subjects of it are governed. These are no other than the judicial laws, which, in the sacred history, are frequently denominated JUDGMENTS.—In a theocracy, Jehovah not only prescribed the qualification of civil rulers; but also pitched on the individual persons to be invested with that power. In other commonwealths, rulers are the ORDINANCE OF MAN; or, as the Apostle speaks, THE CREATURE OF MAN. In the Hebrew commonwealth they were chosen immediately by God. If the

perhaps, no Church at all, unless it be a kind of Ecclesiastical State. The usual idea they affix unto the term theocracy is a state in which God himself acted the part of an earthly monarch, without any regard to the internal obedience of his subjects, and without enforcing his statutes by any but temporal rewards and punishments = “The conditions which entitled to the blessings of the Sinai covenant is obedience to the letter of the Law, even when it did not flow from faith and love. A temporal monarch claims from his subjects only outward honour and obedience. God, therefore, acting in the Sinai Covenant as King of the Jews, demanded from them no more,” ERSKINE’S Dissertations, p. 37. “God in that covenant, acted as a temporal monarch; and from a temporal monarch, temporal prosperity is all we hope, not spiritual blessings, such as righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” p. 22. Hence, they conclude, that an equal providence was administered ever unto each individual in the republic. WARBURTON’S Divine Legat. of Moses Demonstrat.—Others imagine all judicials are of perpetual obligation; and all states, where the Christian religion has obtained, ought to be governed by them. The abettors of this last opinion are confuted by Calvin, Vid. Institut. passim.

Jewish

Jewish nation, at any time, exercised the power of electing magistrates, it consisted either in an approbation of God's choice, or it was the effect of a special mandate from God himself for that purpose: Saul and David were first chosen by God, then by the people: The people, with Moses, elected elders, God commanding them so to do. Again, Jehovah reserved to himself the prerogative of proclaiming war and making peace. Sometimes God proclaimed war against his enemies; as in the case of the Amalekites and Canaanites: At other times, he informed his subjects in this matter by Urim and Thummim, or by his inspired prophets: Hence, they are frequently said to ENQUIRE OF THE LORD before they ventured on war. In one word, This theocracy was also administered by a peculiar providence. Some imagine, that this administration was perfectly equal, both as it respected the nation, and also as it respected individuals; but I greatly doubt if such an administration be compatible with the nature of this present world. I would readily grant, however, that, for the most part, public reformation was rewarded with national prosperity, and public defection punished with national adversity; as far as was consistent with the rights and exercise of divine sovereignty: For God might either punish the perpetrators of wickedness in their own persons, or visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto

to the third or fourth generation *.——Now, the moral law bound not only unto the observation of itself; but also of all its appendages: Thus, for example, the fifth commandment, which bound to honour parents in the commonwealth, as well as in the family, bound to honour those magistrates which God had instituted among them. The second commandment, which binds unto an observance of all that God has appointed in his word, bound also unto the observance of circumcision, the passover, sacrifices of every species, and the observation of their solemn feasts †.

II. I SHALL

* Twenty instances of a peculiar providence are enumerated by Leidekker de Repub. Lib. V. cap. i. § 5. cum notis. He would see a particular account of the theocracy may consult H. Witfius, Orat. Dict. 16. Mar. 1687. DE THEOCRATIA ISRAELITARUM. The first author, as far as I know, who gave a view of Jewish government similar to that which I have offered, was Herman Conringius, de Repub. Hebræor. p. 113, 114. But he fell into the mistake of denying the distinction between the Jewish civil and ecclesiastical governments, which mistake we intend to consider afterwards. The peculiar form, and distinct branches of the Hebrew polity, are delineated, with great accuracy and judgment, by Moses Lowman, in a Dissertation on the Civil Government of the Hebrews; in which the true designs and nature of the government are explained. The JUSTICE, WISDOM, and GOODNESS of the Mosaic constitution are vindicated. London edit. 1740.

† The above view of the Jewish Government, which I take to be the just one, will never yield this conclusion, "That the Mosaic covenant contained only temporal blessings ;

II. I SHALL now express a connected view of both the promises and precepts in this transaction, with Israel's acceptance of them. And their bond seems to have been to the following purpose: "Because the Lord God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has been graciously pleased to take us for his peculiar people, dignifying us with the dispositions of kings and priests, as well as entitling us unto the honour of them; consecrating us to be a holy nation unto himself, while he makes over himself unto us as our own God, assuring us of the guidance of the angel of his presence, to conduct us through the wilderness in the meantime, as also the Messiah in the fulness of time; and also, because he hath renewed the security granted to our fathers, of blessings both spiritual and temporal: WE ENGAGE

and resolve, To hear and believe all that God hath promised, to obey all the precepts he hath enjoined; particularly, to know and acknowledge God as the only true God, and our God,

blessings; and demanded only out-side obedience." Is it just reasoning to argue, because God stood in the capacity of a head to the commonwealth, therefore, he could not stand in any other relation to the members of it? That, because he demanded loyalty, and respect to the judicial law, therefore, he could not claim any spiritual obedience unto the moral law? That, because he promised temporal blessings, therefore, he could not bestow any other? Yet such are the reasonings upon which mighty bulwarks have been erected, for besieging a Covenanted Reformation! But I hope they will never make the smallest stone of it to shake.

and

and to worship and glorify him accordingly ; by receiving, observing, keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as he hath appointed in his word ; making a holy and reverend use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works ; and keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be Sabbath to himself, by an holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, spending the whole time in the public and private exercise of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy : And we resolve, To preserve the honour and perform the duty which belongeth unto every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals ; and to use all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life and the life of others ; and to preserve our own and our neighbour's chastity in heart, speech, and behaviour ; with the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others while we maintain and promote the truth between man and man, and endeavour to maintain, each for himself, his own and his neighbour's good name, especially in witness bearing : And we engage, To endeavour full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards neighbour, and all that is his *."

* Shorter Catechism.

III. I s H

III. I SHALL now enquire how far the Substance of this Covenant is of perpetual obligation; and how far it was peculiar to the typical œconomy.

1. THE characteristic of the better œconomy, CHRIST ALREADY COME IN THE FLESH: The characteristic of the typical œconomy was, CHRIST TO COME. Now, all things in this transaction which did fore-signify Christ then to come, must belong unto the typical œconomy;—all things which prefigured his life, death, or resurrection, or his previous incarnation: Such as, the law of sacrifices, the priesthood, the judicial injunction to marry the widow of a deceased brother, to raise up seed unto him, &c.

2. THERE was likewise a degree of terror and darkness peculiar unto the typical œconomy. Hence, Paul declared to the New Testament saints, that they “were not come unto the mount that might be touched, and burned with fire; nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more *.” This dread and darkness was peculiar to the minor state of the

* Heb. xii. 18, 19.

Church; and a declaration of what was due by sinners unto the justice of God.

3. THE promise of Canaan, and a multitude of temporal blessings in it, was also peculiar unto the ancient œconomy. These shadows prefigured better things, to be bestowed in gospel days; and are, therefore, unnecessary when the substance is exhibited.

ON THE OTHER HAND, We have manifested, that the greater part of the promises made unto Israel at this time are engrossed in the covenant which God has made with the Gospel Church; and, therefore, claim the faith and confession of New Testament saints: The capital promise, in both œconomies, being to this purpose, "I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people."

THE moral law, as a rule of life, is also of perpetual obligation on the members of the Gospel Church: As also the judicial law, unless in things typical, or peculiar to the land of Canaan. In as far as the judgments, by which the commonwealth of Israel was governed, were founded on the principles of equity common to all nations, they are of universal and perpetual obligation. But I need not mention particulars, as their agreement with
the

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the dictates of the law of nature has been abundantly demonstrated by others *.

THIRDLY, I shall now consider the OCCASIONS of this Covenant.

It obtained four hundred and thirty years and sixty days after the call of Abraham †; and about

* *Mosaicarum et Romanorum Legum collatio*, P. PRÆTÆO.

† The date of this Covenant may be ascertained by comparing the various accounts of it marked in the inspired writings, *Exod. xii. 40, 41.* "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years, even the self same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went forth from the land of Egypt." *Gal. iii. 17.* "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."—The particulars which make up this sum stand thus:

	Years.
From the call of Abram to the birth of Isaac,	25
_____ to the birth of Jacob,	60
_____ to the sale of Joseph,	108
_____ to Jacob's descent into Egypt,	22

The sum of which amounts to half the time specified, 215

The other equal part of them may be made up in this manner,

From the descent of Jacob to the death of Joseph,	71
_____ to the birth of Moses,	64
_____ to the deliverance of Israel,	80

215

bout two hundred and sixty years after the fœderal tranſaction between God and Jacob, at Bethel. The incidents which filled up that long interval deſerve to be particularly conſidered.

1. GOD had accompliſhed his promiſes made to Jacob at Bethel, reſpecting his own temporal proſperity and eternal ſalvation. And Jacob had alſo, in ſome meaſure, fulfilled his vow. Now, God's faithfulneſs, in keeping covenant, was a grand encouragement to truſt him yet again; and the patriarch's example was well worthy of imitation.

2. THE grace and holineſs of the covenanted ſeed had been rewarded, and their ſins and infirmities chaſtiſed, by a chequered work of providence, during the ſpace of their ſojourning. Jacob's fraud, for example, had been chaſtiſed by Laban's conduct, both reſpecting his wives and his wages; and his polygamy, by the diſcord of his wives, Rachel's barrenneſs, as well as the diſcord and envy of his children.

The ſojourning includes all that of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, as well as that of ſucceeding generations. The ſeeming difference between the date, above fixed, and the promiſe made to Abraham, Gen. xv. compared with Acts vii. 6. has been removed, Diſſertation II. Part ii. The objections which Ludovic. Capell. raiſed againſt this calculation were fully answered by our learned countryman Mr Robert Bailey, *Opere Hiſtor. Chron.* p. 34. &c. as alſo by Biſhop Uſher, and F. Spanheim, F. F.

The unnatural conduct of his sons in selling Joseph their brother, had been chastised by famine, and various other straits which were brought upon them. But, on the other hand, Jacob and his family had been preserved from the rage of Esau,—from the revenge of the inhabitants of Canaan, which Jacob greatly feared, on account of his sons slaughtering the Shechemites. In the days of famine they had also been satisfied with bread: For divine wisdom so over-ruled their envy against Joseph, that it turned out for their preservation, and his aggrandizement.

3. As both Jacob and Joseph prophesied of Israel's return from Egypt; so the former ordered his body to be carried up into Canaan; and the latter took an oath of his children, that they should carry his bones with them, against the time of their deliverance from bondage. Now God began to accomplish their predictions; and Israel was encouraged to credit every other divine prediction, and to improve the promises God had bestowed on them to his honour and their salvation.

4. JOSEPH'S advancement, and their connection with the court of Egypt, made way for their corruption and idolatry. The Mosaic history is sparing indeed, as to their accusation on that head; but, from various precepts in the Jewish system, compared with other testimonies

redeemed unto their gracious benefactor. Hence the designation which God took to himself, when he covenanted with them, was, "The Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt,—out of the house of bondage."

6. THIS transaction obtained after God had instituted the ordinance of the passover among them, and had performed various miracles, expressive of spiritual privileges, upon them.—He instituted the passover. Four days before the children of Israel came out of Egypt, God commanded Israel, that every family (or if the family consisted of two persons, two might join together) should take a lamb, or a kid, and shut it up from the tenth until the fourteenth day of the month Abib; then it behoved them to kill it. This lamb must be a male of the first year, without blemish: They must also receive its blood in a basin, and sprinkle it, with a bunch of hyssop, on the lintel and side-posts of the door: They must roast the flesh with fire; and, before they proceed, they must search their houses, lest there be any leavened bread in it; as the lamb must be eaten with unleavened bread: A bone of it must not be broken: The whole must be dressed and eaten; and, lest any of it should be left until the morning, what was not eaten must be burnt with fire: This lamb must be eaten with bitter herbs; while the family stand up together, with

with their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hand.—This is one of the most lively and expressive figures of Christ, our passover, who was sacrificed for us. He is, indeed, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world: He was in the prime of his vigour: He was separated just as many years, unto his personal ministry, as the lamb was of days from the rest of the flock: He was without blemish, and without spot: Exposed, in his sufferings, unto the vehement flames of Almighty vengeance.

All the family of Israelites, indeed, must feed on him: He must be received without hesitation, or reserve: True feeding on him is accompanied with repentance, and bitterness of soul for sin. Such as feed on Christ, our passover, must have the staff of God's promise in their hand, and their feet shod with the preparation of the everlasting gospel, as a sure intimation that they have turned their back on this world, and are journeying unto the better country. The sprinkling of blood was peculiar unto the first celebration of this ordinance, as a sign to the destroying angel to spare the first-born of Israel, while he slew the first-born of Egypt. It was also intended as a type of the BLOOD OF SPRINKLING *.—

The ordinance of the passover might have been more copiously considered. But our labour is superseded, as this has been done, to great purpose, by others. BOSTON. Hierozoicon, Lib. II. cap. I. WITSIUS, De Oeconomia. Ford. as well as MATHER and M'EWEN, in our own language.

*

O o

God

God set apart the first-born of Israel unto himself *. This dedication may be reduced into three parts: First, MALE CHILDREN †, who were to be redeemed with five shekels, twenty gerahs being a shekel. Secondly, CLEAN BEASTS, such as were offered on other occasions for sacrifice; and these were to be offered, for a burnt-offering, without redemption, or commutation whatsoever. It behoved them to be sacrificed after they had been fed a month on the dam. Thirdly, Unclean beasts, such as the ass, &c. must either be redeemed at such a price as the priest and the owner could agree upon, or the owner must break their neck. This separation was designed to commemorate the destruction of Egypt's first-born; and the deliverance of Israel's by the sprinkling of blood. God has also a claim unto the first and best of all that we possess. The dedication of the first-fruits was a just acknowledgment that they held their all by tenor of a gift from his royal bounty. All the first-born of Israel deserved destruction as well as those of Egypt; wherefore, if God saved them in the way of sovereign mercy, he had an additional claim upon them. Hence, from their redemption from Egypt, until the consecration of the Levites, they officiated as priests; and,

* Exod. xiii. 2. and verse 11—15. Numb. xviii. 15—17.

† The price of redemption amounted to about eleven shillings and four-pence and two farthings, English money; if the ordinary shekel (which is most probable) be intended.

probably

probably, bore the name, as well as discharged the duty of that office.—The Lord gave them bread from heaven, and water from the smitten rock ; which prefigured Christ, the true bread of life, and the influences of the Holy Ghost. Christ is the smitten rock ; his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed. These two miracles were temporary sacraments, and the passover a standing one as long as the typical œconomy lasted. The covenant sealed by the passover was the covenant of promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; and the engagements under which the covenanters came, by eating the passover, were, to walk in the footsteps of those ancient covenanters, resigning themselves unto the will of God, as to the enlargement of the rule of their duty as he should see meet. The Sinai transaction was a remarkable enlargement of it accordingly.

7. AT this time God rejected the Gentile nations from being a part of his Church ; and, in ordinary circumstances, she was ever after confined unto the posterity of Jacob, until the fulness of time. “ As the first calling of the Gentiles, after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews ; so the first calling of the Jews to be God’s people, when they were called out of Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles *.” Much a-

* Edward’s History of Redemption, p. 66. Clopen. Disput. Select. Disput. 12. De Rejectione Gentium, Sub V. T. Oecon. Mosaica, &c.

bout this time idolatry became universal. It was general, but not universal, in the days of Abraham; for there was certainly some religion in that city of which Melchisedec was king and priest: As also in the land of Uz, where Job lived; so that the true religion was preserved, for some time, among some other families besides that of Abraham; but it did not last long: For even his own offspring, by Keturah, seem to have unchurched themselves by their apostacy, some time prior to this transaction.

8. THIS transaction was accompanied with a change of the Church from a domestic to a congregational state. Domestic churches were sometimes pretty numerous, and large; such as that of Abraham's family: But, for the most part, they were small; for the sons of families soon left their parents, and clave to their wives; as there was abundance of uninhabited land, of which they might take possession at pleasure.—But this was a very great congregation. As to the change, from a domestic to a congregational state, it appears evidently to have been wholly of God: As the Son of God erected the church at first, so he altered her form by a glorious act of his regal power. He did not leave the modelling of that society unto Moses, or any other man, however prudent; but he constituted Moses the representative of his people, and dealt with him in their name and room. This change
may

may be reduced unto the following circumstances:—The place of public ceremonial worship was fixed; whereas, in the domestic state, in every place where a religious family dwelt, there might they offer sacrifices unto the Lord. The abode of the tabernacle was the place of public worship in this congregational church.—The circumstance of time, which was arbitrary in the domestic state, became fixed in this congregational one. The time of sacrificing and ceremonial worship I mean; for the seventh-day Sabbath for moral worship, appears to have been observed from the beginning.—The persons appointed to serve at the altar were also selected from the tribe of Levi, in the congregational state; whereas, every head of a family had a right to be the priest of his own family, in the domestic state.—The ecclesiastic rule was also transferred from the head of the family unto courts instituted for that purpose. It belonged unto the head of the family, in the domestic state of the Church, to cut off, by the sword of ecclesiastic discipline, such persons as had rendered themselves obnoxious; as Noah censured Canaan and his ancestor Ham. In this congregational state, the priest judged in the case of leprosy, and the Sanhedrim in the case of moral impurities. Though the name may be of modern invention, and perhaps of Grecian original; yet the thing itself was of an ancient date. There were elders, of an ecclesiastic species, to judge OF THE LORDS MATTERS, from

from the very beginning. In one word, This congregational state did not preclude the rights of the synagogue one the one hand ; nor exclude those ordinances which had been observed during the domestic state on the other hand. Circumcision and the passover continued under both, as we have seen ; nor was any part of the domestic instruction superseded, but every part of it continued, and enforced, by arguments taken from the more perfect congregational system. This congregation was the family of Jacob dilated, while every moral duty continued in each particular family, as in the original one.

FOURTHLY, The next thing we promised on this subject was, to consider the CONFIRMATIONS of this Covenant. To this head belong all things by which it was executed, so as to be of force upon their consciences, and of use unto their faith. And it was ratified, both on the part of God and Israel.

1. It was proposed to Israel, and accepted by them. It was three times proposed, I presume, and as often accepted by the congregation of Israel : First, It was proposed to them, on the first day of the third month after the children of Israel came out of Egypt, when Moses announced the first cluster of promises we have specified. Then it was spoken in their ears, by God himself, the third day : And afterwards,

terwards, when Moses had received the ceremonial and judicial laws, he came down from the mount to dispense them unto the people. All this was done prior unto the writing of the law; and, after it was written, it was dispensed unto them likewise. Thus, it is plain, that they were not deluded, or drawn into this transaction precipitately; but he brought them on deliberately,—proposing it to them once and again, yea a third time; and as often as God made the proposal, so often did they enter into engagements unto obedience.

2. THIS transaction was ratified by writing. A written deed has been accounted more sure and firm than a verbal declaration ever since that time. This was probably the first written deed that ever obtained in this world: “And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord,” viz. in a BOOK, which is afterwards styled THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT. This book was prior to the writing of them on the two tables of stone: For Moses went not up to receive the tables of the testimony until this transaction was finished, and this book read in the audience of all the people. And it was also prior unto the writing of the books of Exodus and Genesis, &c.

3. IT was solemnly administrated to them after it was written, as we noticed above: “And he took the book of the covenant and read

read in the audience of the people : and they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient." It being usual for persons to have written deeds read over to them, or by them, when they subscribe them ; and oaths, or covenants, solemnly administered to them when they enter into them. Their assent unto this covenant was only verbal indeed : The reason why it was not subscribed, perhaps, was, because writing and subscription was not then in common use for such purposes. It was as late as the days of Jeremiah we read that this solemnity was used in confirmation of a civil contract ; and it was only in the days of Nehemiah, that we read of it practised for ratifying a religious one.

4. THIS covenant was ratified by sacrifice : " And Moses builded an altar under the hill : and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basons, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar : and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people ; and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you, concerning all these words *." We may observe, in the first place,

* Exod. xxiv. 4, 5, 6, 8.

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parations which were made for this affirmation; and they are:—The altar. The people were about to offer themselves unto the Lord; but they were not sure that God would accept the offering through a sacrifice on an altar erected in the desert: And, at this time, the Lord appeared upon the altar, as in his holy habitation, and set up twelve pillars, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel: one pillar for each tribe. The altar and the pillars were probably over against each other: And they certainly represented the two tables in the covenant; the altar, as was just said, being the sacred habitation of the Lord God; and the book being laid upon the altar to intimate the claims which he had on the children of Israel.—He appointed YOUNG MEN into the office of the priesthood; the Levitical priesthood being not yet instituted. These young men were the first-born, whom Moses had consecrated to himself, when he slew the first-born of Egypt: And they were commanded to discharge that office unto which they had been separated.—He assigned unto these young men the work which belonged unto their office: They are commanded to offer offerings, and sacrifice peace-offerings *.

As

BURNT-OFFERINGS. The rites of this sacrifice are described Levit. chap. i. But it does not follow, that they were first instituted when these injunctions were given; for they were offered as early as the days of

As the typical offerings came infinitely short of the great propitiation, both kinds of oblation were necessary to prefigure the one offering of Jesus Christ: And the burnt-offering pointed out the exquisite nature of his sufferings, while the peace-offering prefigured the sweet favour of them before God; and their efficacy to procure peace between God and man. This covenant was a covenant of peace; wherefore it was proper to be confirmed by sacrificing peace-offerings: And the sacrifices were probably cut in twain, and Israel made to pass between the parts, as in the Abrahamic covenant.— Moses commanded the blood of those sacrifices to be preserved, mixed with water, and divided for the purposes for which it was afterwards applied. The Mosaic account is not quite so copious, indeed, as the Apostolic.

Noah and Abel; but they were reduced to system by the ministry of Moses. These sacrifices might consist either of bullocks or sheep, or even of goats; and also of fowls. This burnt-offering was probably of bullocks; for the Apostle informs us, that Moses took the blood of CALVES, or bullocks, for the confirmation of the covenant — **שלמים** Peace-offerings. The rites of them are prescribed Levit. chap. iii. They might be either of bullocks, sheep, or goats. Probably both bullocks and goats were offered, for peace-offerings, at this time; and of each a considerable quantity: For peace-offerings were divided into three parts, one of which was consumed upon the altar, a second by the priests, and the third by the person, or persons, who offered them. If all the rites of the peace-offering were observed at this time, then, Israel would have a feast upon a sacrifice,—a feast with God himself, as an evidence of their reconciliation unto him.

Paul

Paul informs us, that he took the blood of calves, and of goats, with water, and scarlet-wool, and hyssop *. The water was added, to keep the blood fluid during the reading of the book of the covenant, and to make it asperrible. The scarlet-wool and hyssop were used as sprinklers. Hyssop had been used for a like purpose in the first passover, when Israel kept the sprinkling of blood: And some imagine, that it is an emblem of faith; others, of Christ's human nature; hyssop being a humble plant, yet of a pleasant savour; but the former exposition, I presume, is the most probable. The scarlet-wool was probably put upon the end of the bunch of hyssop, and fixed on it to make it imbibe a large quantity of the blood. Again, We may notice the confirmation itself. Says the Apostle, "Neither was the first Testament DEDICATED without blood; our translators add PURIFIED †, in the margin: But neither DEDICATED NOR PURIFIED, perhaps, expresseth the sense so properly as CON-

* Heb. ix. 17—20.

† The original word is *εὐχριστίας*. Scarce two translators have rendered it by one and the same term: Arias Montanus renders it, DEDICATUM EST; Piscator, SANCITUM EST; Estius, INITIATUM EST. But, not to mention others, the best criticism I have seen on this word is that of Fischer, the editor of Stockius, Vid. Stock. in vocem. Verum in N. T. non nisi a Paul. in epistola ad Hebræos adhibetur, cap. ix. 18. ad inveniendum TESTAMENTI CONFIRMATIONEM, STABILITIONEM, et PLENUM COMPLEMENTUM, ut pro aliis valeat.

FIRMED, or RENEWED. The Apostle is discoursing concerning the things which are requisite to confirm a testament, as is evident from the context. Now, this confirmation consisted,—In a SPRINKLING of the book. There is no mention, indeed, of sprinkling the book in the Mosaic history ; but it is expressly mentioned by the Apostle. The Mosaic history, however, includes one article not mentioned by the Apostle ; namely, the sprinkling of the altar. To reconcile the one with the other, it may be proper to observe, That, as the book was laid upon the altar, so it must have been sprinkled along with it. We may also notice, that it was the book AS SPRINKLED, which was dispensed unto the people. Nor was this rite insignificant, as it taught the people to vow obedience to the Law, typically magnified by this sprinkling of blood. Though the Law's demands were exceeding broad ; yet this sprinkling of blood upon it exhibited to them, as in a glass, the source of their deliverance from its curse and condemnation, by the blood of sprinkling.—This confirmation included in it also a sprinkling of the people. He sprinkled ALL the people. This was done, some think, by sprinkling the twelve pillars, the people's representatives ; others, that it was accomplished by sprinkling the elders, or the chief of every family : But, as peace-offerings were a feast for the whole congregation of Israel, so there might be abundance of blood
for

for sprinkling the whole body of the people ; especially as the blood was mixed with water, that part of it, at least, which was applied unto this purpose. That part of it which was sprinkled on the altar was probably unmixed with water, as it was sprinkled immediately on the shedding of it ; but that which was sprinkled on the people was mixed, to keep it from congealing during the reading of the law in the audience of the people. The typical signification of the water was also unnecessary in respect of the altar, and the book ; but extremely proper in respect of the people. In the third place, We have the explication of these rites of confirmation : “ Moses said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words *.” This blood is styled THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT ; as both the parties covenanting were sprinkled with it. It was sprinkled on the altar, as it respected God himself, the first party in this transaction ; implying a satisfaction made to his justice. When persons offered sacrifice unto God, in agreeableness unto his will, he sent a sacred flame from heaven to kindle the wood upon the altar : And that heavenly flame, I humbly judge, represented the flaming sword of his justice a-

* Exod. xxiv. 8.

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gainst sin *. Now, the devouring of the burnt-offering, by a fire of his own kindling, said, that the sword of justice was turned from the sinner to the sacrifice: And the sprinkling of blood bespake the atonement of justice, according to divine appointment. Both blood and water were sprinkled upon the people, the other party in this covenant, to denote both their pardon and purification. This blood did not, of itself, purchase pardon, indeed; but it prefigured the blood of Jesus Christ, which is available for that end. Accordingly, the anti-type fully answered the type; for, when Christ was crucified, and his side pierced, from it came forth blood and water: He came both by water and by blood; by blood, for our justification; and by water, for our sanctification.

I SHALL now make a few REFLECTIONS on this Transaction.

1. WE may see the evil of confining this Covenant unto temporal things. If we look

* There was some token by which Cain knew that Abel's offering was accepted, and his own rejected; and it was, most probably, by God's sending fire from heaven to consume Abel's sacrifice; as he afterwards did in various other instances (Levit. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. vii. 1.), to testify his acceptance of the offering; and that justice seized upon the sacrifice, instead of the sinner who offered it, and for whom it was offered." Dr Guyse's Paraphrase on Heb. xi. 4. the note. Vid. etiam Cloppenb. Schol. Sacrific. cap. iii. § 5. Leidekk. De Repub. Hebraeor. Lib. II. cap. ii. § 8. cum notis.

into.

into the page of ecclesiastical history, we will find, that this notion is far from being newly invented, indeed ; but antiquity can never give sanction to error and falsehood. The Sadducees, so far as we can learn, had the honour of inventing it *. It was a beast of great burden unto them ; the stumbling of it threatened the ruin of their whole cause. If a future state was revealed, then they were certainly bound to believe it ; but they concluded, if it was not, then they were justified in rejecting it. When this sect expired, they seem to have left it, in their latter-will, unto the Gnostics, constituting them their sole heirs †. The Gnostics, in their turn, legated it unto the Marcionites and Manichees ‡ ; and these unto the Pelagians. The Pelagians carefully lodged this tenet under the warm wings of his HOLINESS § ; and there it was preserved in safety until the days of Michael Servetus and Faustus Socinus ||. The German Anabaptists again, borrowed it from

* F. Spanheim, F. F. Histor. Ecclesiast. V. T. p. 459, 460. Johan. Hen. Hottinger. Clavis Scriptur. p. 35, 36.

† F. Spanheim, F. F. Histor. Eccles. Christian. p. 637, 638, and 640, 641.

‡ Idem, p. 643, 649, 752. § Vid. Becan. V. T. p. 42.

|| Servetus represented the Old Testament saints as a parcel of SWINE ! Vid. Calvin. Institut. p. 154. Edit. Genev. 1568. His friend Socinus was equally gross in his sentiments ; but more refined in his language : For the friends of error are obliged to do their utmost to cover it with vain words, Vid. Socin. De Servatore.

these two irrespectable Fathers * : And, as Faustus and his friend were abundantly liberal, they seem also to have lent it to VAN HARMIN † and his followers. These, again, imported it into England, under the auspices of Archbishop LAUD ‡. Whilst this system was cherished by the Laudean faction at home, one still more perplexed was formed by the Cocceians abroad §. VENEMA lighted on the carnal system again, as a golden medium in which both parties might safely meet ||. Mr Warburton (afterwards Bishop of Gloucester), seems to have reprobated Dutch systems, and German ideas; yet, after all, the Reverend Bishop swallows this notion by the gross. But, prior to the appearance of his great work, the Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated, this scheme had been vented, and defended after a way, by JOHN GLAS ¶. These two eminent leaders had two as eminent followers to defend their cause; the one a South Briton, and

* Bullenger adversus Anabap. Lib. II. cap. viii. Cloppenburg Gangren. Disp. xix.

† Jac. Armin. Disp. li. De Eccles. V. T.

‡ Smith's Select Discourses.

§ J. Cocceius fancied, that the moral law was a pure Covenant of Grace: But, after the making of the golden calf, the Old Testament Church was shut up under the curse of the Covenant of Works; and got the ceremonial law imposed on them out of vengeance!

|| Dissertat. Herman Venem. Edit. Haarlem. 1731.

¶ See his Narrative.

: other a Scotsman *. Numerous and strenuous as the defenders of the carnal system have been; yet no one seems ever to have embraced it for its own sake. The Sadducees tended it to keep themselves easy from the thoughts of futurity. The Gnostics, to defend doctrine of a two-fold principle; the one good, and the other evil. The Pelagians, both ancient and modern, to maintain salvation without any spiritual promise as the means of it. The Anabaptists to get quit of the argument drawn from circumcision, and the promises sealed by it, in favour of infant baptism. The Unitarians, to strike off the Old Testament from being a part of the Christian rule. Bishop Warburton, that he might strike out a new path on the argument against the deists. Dr Doddridge, because he did not choose to think of the fashion.—But great as the advocates for the carnal system have been, those for the spiritual one have been still greater. The authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful and true witness, is infinitely more than sufficient to preponderate against the opinion of millions: He has given his suffrage decisive in favour of the system above exhibited; and with it agrees the experience of God's children in every age. They find the promises

Dr Doddridge on Heb. viii. Dr Erskine's Dissertations, Dissert. I. § 1. The latter says, "It is easy to see that the blessings of the Sinai Covenant are merely temporal and outward."

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we have explained to be indeed the wells of salvation.

2. **THIS** subject discovers the veracity and faithfulness of God, in the accomplishment of his promise. The same, yea the **SELF SAME** day which God had fixed for bringing forth the seed of Jacob, was the day of their deliverance. God has a set time in which he will suffer sinners to fill up the measure of the cup of their iniquity; and a set time for the deliverance of his Church: And, till that time come, his people must fill up the measure of their affliction. Now, the deliverance of God's children from the furnace of affliction, frequently coincides with the casting of his enemies into the furnace of his vengeance. Said God to Abraham, 'Thy seed shall be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. How punctual is the accomplishment of the promise! How exact the harmony between the prediction and the event!

3. **GOD** accomplisheth his promise, when his people are reduced unto the lowest extremity; and his enemies raised to the highest pitch of prosperity. Egypt was raised to affluence and grandeur, Israel oppressed to the lowest degree, when God looked down on their affliction.

tion. It is wisely done, that his people may not have it to say, mine own arm hath brought salvation: That his enemies may know, that, even in those things in which they deal proudly, he is above them. When God begins his work, with his people at their lowest ebb, and his enemies in their fullest strength; the more of God, and the less of man, is to be seen in the dispensation. Israel must be redeemed from the hand of the Egyptians, and from their gods, not when Joseph governed the kingdom; but when the male-children are doomed to the river by their affectionate parents. To this event may be applied, the word of God spoken by the prophet: "I have a long time held my peace, I have been still and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travelling woman: I will destroy and devour at once. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs: and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools of water. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

4. **WHEN** the circumstances of God's people are such as hinder them from the discharge of those duties which they owe to God, the present and succeeding generations, then they

may warrantably use every lawful mean to accomplish a change. God pronounced the way clear for Israel to leave Egypt, as their situation incapacitated them for their duty. Not a few, at this day, are under hardships of the very same kind : If the servants of many seek a reasonable time to serve the Lord, especially in solemn duties, they stand fair in the way to get such an answer as Pharoah gave unto Israel : " YE ARE IDLE, YE ARE IDLE, therefore ye say, Let us go and serve the Lord : Get ye to your burdens ; Wherefore do ye let the work ? " The lower class, in many corners of the nation, are not commanded to kill the bodies of their children, indeed ; but, what is worse, they are necessitated to kill their souls ; as they have it not in their power to fulfil those vows under which they came for them at their baptism. As ever persons value the souls of their children, let them avoid those places which incapacitate them from training up their children. In the way that they should go, either by distance from the means of instruction, or such hard service as affords neither time nor means to bestow it. If persons be so hurried for want of time ; or so far distant as they cannot attend on public ordinances, then they ought to take the first lawful opportunity for changing their situation,—trusting that God will provide for them in the way of duty ; or if exposed unto any loss, he will either make

up some other way, in the course of his providence, or sanctify it unto them *.

5. THE law unto which covenanters should engage is, the Law as magnified by the blood of Christ. The law which Israel promised obedience to is, the Law sprinkled with the blood of sacrifices, — teaching all Israelites indeed, to vow obedience unto the Moral Law in the hand of Christ the Mediator. They are not without law to God; but under the Law to Christ. Faith's contemplation of the blood of sprinkling applied to the Law, is a grand encouragement to keep all God's commandments.

6. COVENANTERS ought to be carefully instructed as to the nature and extent of covenant-duties, previous unto their entering into federal engagements. How often is the matter of this covenant declared unto Israel! God

* See also Dissertation II. Part i. On Abraham's removal from Chaldea. — Servants ought to make it an article in their conditions to have a reasonable time allowed for fasting and the celebration of the Lord's Supper: And then the laws of the country, for which we ought to be thankful unto the King of Nations, will make good that article, even although persons professing godliness should serve unreasonable and wicked men. It is much more eligible, however, to strive to gain the good will of masters by faithful service at other times; who, if reasonable, will not grudge a short time for the service of the Lord; and to make choice of such masters as shew a proper deference to divine things.

himself

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himself spake it; Moses spake it once and again: He wrote it, and read it in the ears of all the people. Many, at this time, would be ready to reckon these things needless repetitions; but God, whose judgment is always according to truth, determined them to be needful precautions, that his people might covenant with knowledge and understanding.

7. **WHEN** covenanters renew their engagements to the Most High, they ought to engross into their bond every part of reformation formerly attained. When Israel covenanted with God at Sinai, they embraced all those institutions which were given unto the Church prior unto that transaction: For example, Circumcision, which was given to their fathers, as well as the passover to themselves, but a few months before. Both the promises and precepts which belonged to former covenants were engrossed in this one: Only this was the most perfect edition of them. The ordinances, which lay scattered in the memories of men, were all reduced to one entire and written system. And the rules, especially respecting ceremonial institutions, which had been formerly indefinitely expressed, were, at this time, particularly delineated, and fully ascertained.

PART

P A R T II.

EXOD. xxxiv. 5 — 27.

THE same method suits this Part which was used in the former. I shall,

FIRST, Consider the PARTIES Covenanting.

1. **THE** first party proclaimed himself to be “the Lord, the Lord God merciful*,” &c.—— He is “the Lord, the Lord;” or **JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH** †! When the Most High is spoken of in Scripture, frequently the expression is, the Lord, Jehovah; but it is otherways here. The Jews have such a superstitious veneration for this name, that they do not pronounce it at all; but, in this place, God himself pronounceth it once and again: And who can charge him with using it in vain? The repetition of this august name renders the language rapturous and extatic; as if he had said, “I am Jehovah, even Jehovah,” the Existent, the Existent! for so the name is explained by God himself, “**I AM THAT I AM** ‡:” I, even I, have being

* Exod. xxxiv. 6. † ADONAI JEHOVAH.

‡ Exod. iii. 14. Some have observed, that there are three names of God taken from his nature, אלהים, יהוה, יהי;

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being in and of myself; I, even I, give being to all my purposes, promises, and threatenings. Says an elegant writer, "John well explains this name, by the WHO IS, WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME; or, as the passage might be rendered, the Present, the Past, and the Future Being; or, once more, the Being THAT IS, the Being THAT WAS, the Being THAT WILL BE: That is, the Perpetual, the Eternal, and Unchangeable Being *." I shall only further observe, That there was beauty and fitness of the revelation of this peculiarly glorious name at this time; when Israel had changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an ox. This was a most explicit testimony against their most shameful idolatry.—He proclaimed himself to be **GOD**; even the Almighty God, as the name imports†.

GOD

יְהוָה; and all these are much of the same import. So far as I have been able to observe יְהוָה is used only in scripture songs: And from hence I am ready to conclude, it is the poetic dialect for Jehovah. As to the other, it is to be found only in the text just now quoted. It appears evidently to be a divine name; and to it our Lord refers, John viii. 58. "Before Abraham was I AM:" It cannot imply less than eternal, independent, and immutable existence. The learned reader will find three Dissertations on the name JEHOVAH, in Leusden's *Philologus Hebraeus*, Dissert. xxvii. et sequentibus: In them is to be found the substance of all the observations made on that subject, whether grammatical or theological.

* Davies's Ser. Vol. II. p. 229. London, edit. 3.

† Exod. xxxiv. 6. The original word is אֱלֹהִים. Our translators render it God; as also אֱלֹהִים and אֱלֹהִים.

Some

God able to uphold, preserve, and govern his creatures; as he is the maker of them all: The omnipotent God, who reigneth for ever: The living God, in opposition to dead idols. —He proclaims himself to be “the Lord, the Lord God MERCIFUL*.” The word imports, such compassion, and infinitely greater, as a woman hath for the son of her womb; for God deigns to speak after the manner of men concerning his commiseration of sinners: He declares, that his heart is turned within

Some reckon all these names of both the same meaning and derivation: Others apprehend they are different; the former being derived from **אֱל** ROBUR, STRENGTH; and the latter from **אֱלֵה** COLUIT, TO WORSHIP. But, at any rate, the term used in our text must denote OMNIPOTENCE; for, whatever be the root of **אֱלֵה** and **אֱלֵהִים**, **אֱל**, is confessedly the root of **אֱל**; and **אֱל** is sometimes used as a divine name; sometimes it is taken adjectively, denoting STRENGTH: And God is indeed STRONG in mercy, grace, &c.

* Exod. xxxiv. 6. **רַחוּם**. This term is never applied to creatures; nor is it expressive of their pity towards each other, so far as I have observed: A distinguishing name is used by God himself, to exhibit his distinguishing mercy. Though it is not applied unto creature-mercy, yet it is a metaphorical expression, and the colouring borrowed from creatures: **רַחוּם** is the root of it; and it is explained by CONRADUS KIRCHER, “Intra viscera intercluit, summo et intimo amoris affectu tactus erga aliquem quem Deus hominum visceribus indidit. Intimo commiserationis affectu aliquem amplexus est, quid sciz. vulva seu matrix solet concipere, complecti, fovere alere, tueri, et conservare scitum.” The allusion is unto a mother, glowing with the warmest affection toward the son of her womb.

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being in and of myself; I, ever together:
 to all my purposes, promises, &c. "Where
 Says an elegant writer, "and of thy
 this name, by the who — He pro-
 WHO IS TO COME; o Lord God—G RA-
 be rendered, the Pr ows his favour up on
 Future Being; or. y has the miserable
 is, the Being and grace the undeservi-
 WILL BE: T God is gracious not only in
 and Uncha without regard unto past meri-
 ther obs without any regard to future reward
 nefs of hath manifested this perfection in the
 ous work of redemption: "By grace are ye saved
 g. through faith." — He announceth himself to
 be "the Lord God—LONG-SUFFERING †.
 In this particular, the language is evidently
 metaphorical: God represents himself as o
 LONG, or BROAD NOSTRILS, though he be a
 pure spirit. This is the literal translation of
 that which our translators render LONG-SUF-
 FERING. The divine wrath is styled his
 NOSTRILS in scripture: "If God will not with-
 draw his anger:" Heb. his NOSTRILS ‡. He
 can

* Exod. xxxiv. 6. אַחַד. This term is also ascribed uniformly to God, wherever it occurs in the inspired writings: Nor does it ever express the favour of one creature unto another.

† Exod. xxxiv. 6. ut supra. The original phrase is, עֵינֵי תָּנָן, LONGUS NARIBUS.

‡ Job ix. 13. compared with Psal. lxxiv. 1. "Why doth thine anger smoke?" Heb. NOSTRILS SMOKE. The allusion

can suffer much even at the hand of vessels of wrath, as well as at the hand of vessels of mercy. Accordingly, he exercised much long-suffering toward that generation with which he covenanted.—He announced himself to be “the Lord God—ABUNDANT IN GOODNESS*.” God had promised to Moses to make all his GOODNESS to pass before him: and the whole of this declaration is the answer of Moses’s prayer, and the accomplishment of that promise. Hence, each of his perfections is his goodness variegated, according to the object

allusion appears to be this: In anger, persons breathe out thick fumes, from the fervour of blood and animal spirits about the heart. Where the passages are strait, the fumes cannot have a speedy vent; and, therefore, excite greater emotion within: Where the nostrils are long and wide, the fumes of rage evaporate, the cooling air refrigerates the boiling heart. The metaphor must not be stretched so far as to infer, that God has any need of external aid to allay the heat of his anger; but the meaning must be, That he ever possesseth such tranquillity of mind, and infinitely more, as men do possess who have such assistance.

* Exod. xxxiv. 6. רַב־חֶסֶד. This phrase is remarkably strong; it heaps one superlative above another: חֶסֶד signifies either that which is exceeding good, or exceeding bad; SUMMUM GRADUM REI, as Stockins observes. And רַב denotes great, abundant, yea greatest: For the Hebrews use the positive for the comparative, or even for the superlative. The vigor of the phrase, then, seems rather superior to our idioms of language; for they refuse to heap one superlative above another. The best translation, perhaps, of which our language can admit, is, EXCEEDING ABUNDANT IN BOUNTY.

of it. Some divines, however, consider the glorious attribute meant, to be his bounty, manifested in bestowing his Son, to free us from hell; his Spirit, to fit us for heaven; his angels, to guard us on earth; ample provision by the way; and full satisfaction at the journey's end. What more can be desired? Such was the BOUNTY expressed to Israel; and represented, in a familiar manner, by all that he did unto them in the wilderness*.—He revealed himself as “the Lord God—ABUNDANT IN TRUTH†.” Some apprehend, that this term is not expressive of another attribute, but contains an assertion of the truth and verity of his bounty. But I am rather inclined to understand it of another attribute, even the veracity of the Deity: And the sacred punctuation connects abundant with TRUTH and veracity, as well as with BOUNTY. God is great and glorious in the accomplishment of his promises, as well as the execution of his threatenings: And, as he had glorified that perfection, in a very remarkable manner, in the accomplishment of these promises made to Abraham; so it was fit to put Israel in re-

* Dr Arrowsmith's *Armilla catechetica*, p. 181—191.

† The inspired original (Exod. xxxiv. 6:), Goodness and Truth are conjoined together by the punctuation: Not as if God meant to teach us that he is truly good (though this is a truth in itself), but that he is as true as good; none ought so to presume on his goodness, as to expect an interest in it at the expence of his Truth.

membrance of it. And he had been equally true to his threatening, by punishing idolatry in the matter of the golden calf.—This glorious party is “the Lord God—KEEPING MERCY FOR THOUSANDS *.” The objects of this mercy are THOUSANDS, even the many thousands of Israel; or thousands of generations, in succession; for he commands his word to a thousand generations. The nature of this mercy has been considered above, under the notion of GOODNESS. The emphasis of the testimony lies on the word KEEPING: As he is superabundant in mercy, so he RESERVES it unto thousands. The term KEEPING seems to import, that, notwithstanding all his gracious communications, which have been dispensed heretofore, he has still enough, and to spare, IN RESERVE. He has reserved abundance for the many thousands of the present generation,

* Exod. xxxiv. 7. Some critical writers have observed, that NUN, in the beginning of נִשְׂחַל, is one of the large letters. And Buxtorf makes the following remark upon it, “נ in voce נִשְׂחַל ubi legitur, in Exod. xxxiv. 7. (est littera majuscula, viz.) SERVANS CLEMENTIAM MILLEBUS. Ad considerandum magnitudinem gratiæ Dei, quæ se in millena millia, i. e. in infinitum extendit erga eos, qui fœdus ipsius conservant.” TIERFRIAS, cap. xiv. A late writer also remarks, “The Hebrews observe, that the first letter of the word translated KEEPING is much larger than usual, which shews, that a particular emphasis is to be laid upon it; as if he should say, I MOST STRICTLY, AND RICHLY, KEEP MERCY FOR THOUSANDS: THE TREASURE IS IMMENSE, AND CAN NEVER BE EXHAUSTED.” Mr Gibbons.

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rendered. I shall represent some of these given senses in the words of one of our Westminster divines, "The most read as we do, THAT WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY, &c. But amongst these who agree in translation, there is some difference about the meaning of the words. The major part apply them wholly to the justice of God, in taking vengeance on obstinate sinners. Some few, respecting the scope of the whole context, which is to set forth the goodness of God, consider this also as relating to that." This, his justice upon the wicked, is a part of his goodness towards his people; as it is said, The just shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance. He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. A gloss that may receive confirmation from certain passages in the hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm: Where the destruction of opposite princes is recorded, as an evidence of God's mercy to his Church, &c.—But the learned critic, Ludovicus de Dieu, considering,

ty, Transgression, and Sin must be the objects of this judicial act. And the verb, in the form of *Pihel*, denotes always judicial approbation. This is evident from the universal usage of scripture, Exod. xx. 7. Numb. xiv. 18. Deut. v. 11. 1 Kings ii. 9. Job. ix. 28. Jer. xxx. 11. chap. xlv. 28. Joel iii. 21. Nah. i. 3. &c. The verb is repeated to denote the certainty of the event: That is, the certainty of the condemnation of sin. Now, when God says, in approving, he will not approve of sin, more is implied than expressed: 'It is, as if he had said, I must SURELY, and INFALLIBLY, condemn it.

that

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that in other places, particularly Zech. v. 3. the word NAKAH signifieth TO MAKE VOID, and TO CUT OFF, by altering the translation of these words, puts them in a posture of looking directly at the goodness of God, and not with an oblique glance. He renders them thus, EVACUATING, CUTTING OFF, OR DESTROYING ;—he will not evacuate, cut off, or destroy ; visiting the iniquities of the father upon the children unto the third and fourth generation : Making this the sense, “ So great is God’s goodness, that even when he is angry, and punisheth, yet he will not utterly overthrow : He visiteth, indeed, the sins of the fathers upon the children ; but it is to the third or fourth generation only, not forever.” Now, according to this interpretation (which, for ought I know, may be well received) the expressions import an eighth branch of divine goodness, viz. CLEMENCY IN CORRECTING, here set forth by a general declaration, and by a particular instance : First, By a general declaration, in these words, VENAKKEH LO JENAKKEH, destroying he will not destroy ; that is, altogether, * &c. Though this last view of the words be plausible, I do not see any reason for going into it. It is undeniably certain, that the subject of which God speaks is SIN, rather than ungodly men, or his own

* Dr Arrowsmith’s Armilla Catechetica, p. 223. et deinceps.

people: And that which he declares concerning it is, That HE DOES NOT APPROVE OF IT;—he must necessarily CONDEMN IT; as he is of PURER EYES THAN TO BEHOLD EVIL. —Lastly, He is “the Lord God—VISITING THE INIQUITIES OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION*.” Here it may be proper to enquire, What we are to understand by VISITING; and how such a visitation can consist with the rectoral justice of God? Divines are not a little divided about the extent of this punishment, whether it be temporal or eternal. And there is some difficulty in reconciling this character, which God takes to himself, with that declaration which he makes concerning his government: “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father†.” To remove which, some alledged, that Ezekiel speaks of eternal punishment, and Moses of that which is merely temporal: But this solution does not appear to be solid. The persons to whom Ezekiel addressed himself, taxed the divine government with injustice, in punishing that generation for the iniquities of former ones: The prophet, therefore, gave them to know, that they were far from being innocent in their own persons. Ezekiel speaks of temporal punishment, then, as well as Moses; even the Babylonish captivity, and all concomitant plagues. The persons

* Exod. xxxiv. 7. † Ezek. xviii. 20.

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visited, I humbly judge, are such as are partakers of their father's sins by IMITATION, not by IMPUTATION: And the visitation is not merely temporal, but also eternal. It is not to be wondered at, if persons, who serve themselves heirs unto their father's sins, by walking in their ways, be visited with such plagues as these iniquities incur: For example, The posterity of Cain were not only punished with the flood, but also by being cast out of the Church, when their father was cast out from THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.—The justice and equity of this procedure will appear, if we consider that children have guilt enough of their own to procure all the vengeance inflicted on them: And their guilt is particularly aggravated, as they did not take warning by the dreadful example of their ancestors; but still prosecuted their fatal courses*.

2. THE other party is Moses, and all Israel with him: "After the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee, and with Israel†." The various capacities and relations in which they stood; and the various branches of their character, have been considered in the

* Vid. ZANCHIUM, De Lege Dei. De Secundo precepto. p. 272, 273. CALVINUM, Harmon. Pentateuch in Precept. Secund. DURHAM on the Second Commandment.

† Exod. xxxiv. 27.

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former part of this Dissertation: Wherefore, I proceed,

SECONDLY, To consider the CONTENTS of this Covenant, which are,

I. A SOLEMN declaration, on the part of the Son of God, on the one part.

1. HE declared, "before all the people, I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee *." Some expositors explain this promise of all the miracles done for them in the wilderness, and in putting them into possession of Canaan: But, to me, the blessing intended appears to be, God's gracious presence, for which Moses made such earnest intercession in behalf of the congregation. The work of Jehovah is said to be MARVELLOUS and TERRIBLE. The first of these terms is not always taken in a bad sense: Sometimes it denotes gracious and miraculous operations in favour of his Church, as well as his vengeance on his enemies †. And the abode of the Son of God in the pillar of fire, and in the pillar of cloud, was marvellous in the eyes of all Israel: Nor was it more terrible

* Exod. xxxiv. 10. † Psal. xl. 5. cxviii. 23.

the Church than comforting to every genuine believer. The other term is expressive of that reverence and regard which is due unto the person and work of Jehovah: And the phrase might, with full as much propriety, be rendered, "It is a venerable thing;" or, "He is a venerable person whom I am adorning unto thee *."

2. HE renewed the promise of victory over the nations of Canaan. This promise was first made to Abraham, and had been often renewed to his seed, as we have seen. The renovation of it, at this time, was an amazing proof of divine faithfulness and sovereignty to his people: Though they rebelled against him, yet he did not deliver them into the hands of their enemies; but still gave them a new assurance of victory over them.

* The term נָוֶה denotes VENERABLE as well as terrible, Gen. xxviii. 17. Exod. xv. 11. And that which our translators render THING is נָוֶה, or else they supply it: Either of which are absurd. It is much more proper to understand it of a PERSON than of a THING: And no other person can be understood, or intended, than the Angel of the Covenant, who dwelt in the bush, and in the most holy place.—That which is promised concerning this person is, to PREPARE and ADORN him. עָשָׂה Interdum ORNATUS est magis est quam affectionis," Robertson, Thesaur. in vocem. Now, the preparation of the habitation of the Shechinah to dwell in the congregation of Israel, was a solemn prelude of the PREPARATION of Christ's human nature, which was decorated to the Father, that his divine nature might tabernacle in it in the fulness of time.

ON

ON THE OTHER PART, He enjoined them

1. To abstain from making a covenant with the inhabitants of Canaan, these nations which God had destined to utter destruction. There was a particular reason for this prohibition, even the divine declaration formerly given, announcing their certain and utter destruction: And also a reason of universal and perpetual force, specified in the text "Lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee and thou go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee and thou eat of his sacrifice; and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and the daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods*." How often have persons made a sacrifice of their religious professions out of complaisance unto their connections! At first, these professions meant only to comply for once, perhaps; but having once set their feet into the down-hill path, they find it difficult, if not impossible, to make a decent retreat. They go on, from begun apostacy, to down-right enmity.

2. To break down all monuments of idolatry: "But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves†." This commandment had been in the fore-
in

* Exod. xxxiv. 12, 15, 16.

† Exod. xxxiv. 13.

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g transaction, and was, for special purposes, created in this one *; namely, That their covenant-renovation might contain a testimony, need directly against their idolatry in making a golden calf, which had been done in imitation of Egyptian idolatry. Accordingly, as soon as Israel returned to the Lord, in afterwards, by covenant-renovation, they broke down the monuments of idolatry.

3. IF they might not suffer such monuments of idolatry, as had been framed by others, to be made in their land, much less might they make unto themselves any molten gods †." Idols were absolutely unlawful; whether included as the objects, or as the means of worship.

4. GOD enjoined them OF NEW, to celebrate their solemn feasts, and dedicate their first-born, and first-fruits, unto himself. These bore also part in the foregoing transaction; and the commandment was given out at this time, that these feasts might be opposed to THAT FEAST which they had proclaimed in honour of the golden calf.

5. GOD prescribed abstinence from SEETHING a kid in his mother's milk. Some of the enemies of religion have derided this precept,

* Exod. xxiii. 24. † Exod. xxxiv. 17.

as trivial, and some of its friends have hesitated as to the reason of it; but there is no room either for derision or doubt. Such as have duly attended unto the matter find, that the idolaters of ancient times seethed a kid in its mother's milk; and, in a superstitious manner, sprinkled their fields, orchards, and vineyards therewith, imagining, by these means, to fructify them against the next year*. Now, this prohibition was properly inserted in this covenant, as it was intended to be a testimony against all idolatry and superstition, then abounding, whatsoever.

THIRDLY, The **OCCASIONS** of this Covenant deserve to be considered in the next place. The interval between this covenant and the last was not above four months: The incidents which filled it up, however, were various and important.

I. IMMEDIATELY after the former covenant, Moses had been called up to the mount, for the purpose of receiving instructions as to the making of the tabernacle, and the office of the priesthood. Genuine covenanters put a blank into God's hand; and God took this method to fill it up. The space of time between Moses's being called up into the mount,

* GREGORY'S Observat. cap. xix. apud Crit. Sac.
Tom. ix.

and his leaving Joshua, was six days: On the seventh day God called to Moses out of the cloud. This seventh day was probably the Sabbath; and the first of the forty days on which Moses fasted *. This is one of the particulars in which Moses prefigured our Lord Jesus Christ. One reason why both observed such a fast seems to have been a confirmation of the mission,—evidencing they were at once divinely upheld, and divinely authorised.

2. DURING Moses's abode on the mount, the congregation of Israel, impatient of his absence, despairing of his return, and swayed by the idolatrous taint of Egypt, too successfully solicited Aaron to MAKE them gods to go before them: Aaron, far from that firmness which became his station, not only complied with their request, but also planned the execution of it. To satisfy their fond desires, and silence their clamours, he founded the GOLDEN CALF. Thus, in the very place where they had expressly engaged NOT TO MAKE UNTO THEMSELVES ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, did they change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an ox. While the fire of his jealousy, which fenced this article, flamed about the mount, did the rage of idolatry flame in their hearts.

* Exod. xxxiv. 18.

3. THEIR idolatry involved in it a notable breach of covenant with God, and provoked him to break off from finishing that system of ordinances which he was bestowing by the ministry of Moses; and to denounce his most dreadful indignation against them. The system was far advanced, indeed, before it was broken off. The ordinances of the tabernacle, and the regulations of the priesthood, were already finished; as also the writing of the ten commandments, on TABLES of stone. These tables were the workmanship of God, both in point of preparation and inscription. He saw meet to write the substance of the former covenant on stone, to denote the perpetuity of the ten commandments, as the rule of conduct and instruction to his children. The tables were broken, however, by Moses, when he came down from the mount. Some tax Moses with rage and weakness in this step of his conduct; others endeavour to excuse him. But, whether he was culpable or not, his conduct was certainly emblematical of God's breaking off from finishing the system of ordinances which he had begun; and it was also a standing testimony against their breach of covenant with him. Hence, he denounced most terrible judgments against them: "I have seen this people, and behold (said he) it is a stiff-necked people! Now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume

consume them." How enormous their guilt !
How weighty their punishment !

4. As Moses had the most difficult work cut out for him ; so he was enabled to execute it with dexterity, firmness, and success.—When God announced Israel's revolt unto him, he became their compassionate intercessor. God enumerated the aggravating circumstances of their enormous guilt, threatening their destruction ; and promising to make of Moses a great nation : But he, far from being taken with the flattering prospect of the aggrandizement of his own family, turned his faith to the promise, and urged the oath by which it had been ratified to the patriarchs ; as also the occasion which his enemies would take to blaspheme his name, as arguments for its accomplishment and their preservation *.—When he had so far prevailed with God, as to prevent the utter destruction of that people, he came down to stop the progress of their idolatry, arraign them for their revolt, and punish the most flagrant offenders.—He burnt the calf in fire ; and, by his miraculous power, perhaps, ground it to powder ; and, by causing Israel to drink the water on which it was strewed, he taught them, that this deity was so far from bringing them out of the land of Egypt, that, in a short time, it would be in the dung-hill.

* Exod. xxxii. 12. 13.

The first person arraigned was Aaron, his brother, who made but a feeble defence of his dastardly compliance. Then Moses set up a tabernacle without the camp, and invited such as were on the Lord's side to repair unto it: Every one who was really on the Lord's side complied with the invitation; the Levites, in particular, followed Moses; and, at his command, executed vengeance on such as stayed behind in the idolatrous camp, which God had deserted: They consecrated themselves, particularly by the impartiality of it on their nearest relations: It was limited unto three thousand, however; probably because the rest had been brought unto repentance and humiliation*. Thus, God separated between the precious and the vile, that his covenanters might, in some measure, be a pure lump.— On the next day, Moses renewed his intercession for the remnant that was left †; requesting safe conduct into the promised land. God granted his petition; but promised only a created angel for their leader. Some imagine, he was only a created angel who was afterwards given: But the character which the Mosaic history affords of him, can by no means agree to a created angel. When a created angel

* Exod. xxxiii. 4—6.

† We have an epitome of his prayer, chap. xxxii. 30—34. And the particulars more fully delineated, chap. xxxiii. 12—23.

was promised, all the people mourned, as his guidance was no security against destruction, by God's immediate hand: But the ANGEL OF HIS PRESENCE was an abundant preservation*. His request was granted, and suitably improved, by this powerful intercessor. He followed it by another saying, "I beseech the shew me thy glory." Some have censured this petition, as presumptuous; but God, who makes the best of his people's services, limited it, and then granted it, in the only sense in which it could be granted. Moses requested a sight of his glory, abstractly considered, without attending to the difference between his essential and his declarative glory. God answered, "Thou canst not see my face; for no man can see me and live †." A sight of his declarative glory, however, is granted, which God denominates his GOODNESS ‡. And the various perfections, above considered, are, each of them, a proof, that he is good in himself,

* Said God, My presence shall go with thee, *Exod. xxxiii. 14.* The Lord Christ may, with great propriety, be called THE PRESENCE OF GOD, and THE ANGEL OF HIS PRESENCE; because special fellowship is only to be enjoyed through Christ, and his presence manifested in him. God is in him in a peculiarly glorious manner; Hence, said Christ, "He that hath seen me hath seen the father.—Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me," *John xiv. 10, 11.*

† *Exod. xxxiii. 20.* ‡ *Exod. xxxiii. 19.* "And he said, I will make all my GOODNESS pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee."

and

and also to his children.—Moses improved this manifestation of his glory, as an encouragement unto solemn confession of sin, and supplication for mercy: “Moses made haste and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped: And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go amongst us; (for it is a stiff-necked people): and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance*.” And this covenant-renovation is to be considered as an answer unto that prayer,—as an evidence that their sins were pardoned,—that God had taken them for his inheritance.

FOURTHLY, I shall now consider the **CONFIRMATIONS** of this Covenant.

1. IT was administered to the whole congregation: “He gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken unto him in mount Sinai†.” Though the consent of this congregation is not recorded, it is necessarily implied; otherways they had been guilty of the greatest rebellion, which would certainly have drawn down the immediate vengeance of heaven.

2. IT was confirmed by writing. It was written both by the finger of God and the hand

* Exod. xxxiv. 8, 9.

† Exod. xxxiv. 32.

of Moses.—The tables of the covenant, which Moses broke, were replaced: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone, like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words which were in the first tables, which thou brakest *.”—“And he hewed two tables of stone, like unto the first:—and he took in his hand the two tables of stone†.” The former tables were all of divine workmanship, both in point of preparation and inscription; but these were prepared by Moses. The reasons assigned for this difference are various. Some apprehend, the former edition were all of divine workmanship, to intimate, that they contained the Covenant of Works: And this was partly the workmanship of Moses, a typical mediator, to shew, that the Law was stript of its covenant-form, and given, as a rule of life, in the hand of a Mediator ‡. But, to believers, both editions were a rule of life; and the first, as well as the second, was written by the finger of the Son of God, as Mediator. Again, some reckon, that Moses was enjoined to hew the tables for this edition, as a Punishment for his breaking the first tables §. But, as Moses is never taxed by God for this

* Exod. xxxiv. 1. † Exod. xxxiv. 4.

‡ Notes on the Marrow of Modern Divinity, p. 74.

§ The greater part of the Jewish Expositors give this view of the matter, as Abarbinel, Rabbi Solomon, &c. quoted by Buxtorf, Dissert. de Decalog. Thes. 18.

part

part of his conduct, I know no reason why he should be condemned by men. It is better, with Calvin and others, to consider this workmanship of Moses, as a standing mark of God's displeasure, and chastisement of the children of Israel, for their breach of covenant. Tho' he suffered their wound to be healed, yet this human workmanship was as a scar, to perpetuate the remembrance of it for their humiliation *. The ten commandments had various prerogatives

* CALVIN in Pentateuch. p. 1247. edit. Genev. 1617. "Quamquam hac tessera vel externo symbolo sancita fuit instauratio abrupta fœderis, ne tamen torporem induceret veniæ facilitas, voluit Deus aliquod pœnæ vestigium restare: ac si vulnere sanato manerit cicatrix. Nullum in prioribus Tabulis hominis artificium intervenerat: nam Deus arcana sua virtute sculptas tradiderat Mosi, nunc pars illius tantæ dignitatis imminuitur, dum jubetur Moses lapides asserre mann hominis politos, in quibus scribat decem verba. Quare non prorsus deleta fuit ignominia sceleris: nihil tamen quod in salutem necessarium foret vel utile, detractum. Nam ad testimonium gratiæ Dei et legis commendationem, ut reverenter eam susciperent, nihil defuit: tantum nota illa fuerunt humiliati, quod lapides in quibus Deus fœdus suum deposuit, non fuerunt manu ejus formati, nec nati in sacra monte." Vid. etiam Buxtorf super citat. Herman. Wits. De Oecon. Fœd. Lib. IV. cap. iv. §. 23.—
An excellent author seems rather to blunder on this subject; he insinuates, that the reason of Moses's workmanship is, to teach us, "That, if we would have God to write the law in our hearts, we must prepare our hearts for the reception of it," Mr Henry, on Exod. xxxiv. 1. But is not the hearts of all men deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, antecedent to God's inscription of his law upon it? Of what preparation,

erogatives superior unto the judicial and ceremonial laws, in each edition of them; of which their inscription on tables of stone was the. The reason of this inscription seems to be, the perpetual remembrance of what had been transacted; for it was usual, in ancient times, to engrave matters of importance on stone, or brass. Job alludes unto this custom, in his pathetic wish: "O that my words were written! O that they were now printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever *."——This covenant was also written by the hand of Moses: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words have I made a covenant with thee, and with Israel †." The reason of this registration has been explained in the preceding part. The former covenant comprehended that which is recorded in Exod. xx. and xxiii. inclusive: And this one, all recorded in chap. xxxiv. from verse 10th to verse 27th inclusive. This last is probably engrossed in the same book with the former one likewise.

n, then, is it capable? Whether good or bad? If good, How shall a heart desperately wicked accomplish it? If bad, What avails it in the sight of God? What a pity is it, that such a savoury writer should so frequently mix gall and wormwood with salutary and agreeable medicines!

* Job. xix. 23, 24. † Exod. xxxiv. 27.

3. BESIDE the standing confirmation of the ceremonial law *, it was ratified by the miraculous appearance of Moses's face, when he came down from the mount. The reason of this appearance, and the vail with which he covered it †, have exercised the abilities of various

* The ordinances of the ceremonial law comprehend holy places, holy persons, holy things, and holy times. The best little system of it which I have seen is that of HADRIAN RELAND *De Antiquitat. Sacr. Vet. Hebræor. Ultraject. edit. 1717.* It is a pity it is not known in our language, illustrated with a comparison of the type with the antitype.

† The Rev. Mr Boston of Etrick invents a new and uncommon narrative on the historical part of this miracle, *Notes on the Marrow of Modern Divinity*, p. 112. He gives out, that Moses went into the tabernacle; and then the tabernacle served instead of a vail to his face. And, having done with speaking, he puts another vail on his face, and comes out unto the congregation. This narrative he founds upon a criticism on *Exod. xxxiv. 31*. Our translation has it, "And Aaron, and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him." But Mr Boston would read it, "And Aaron, and all the princes returned unto him in the testimony." This criticism is far from being well founded, however; it is not only contrary to his own solid canons of criticism, laid down in his *Tractatus Stigmologicus*, but also to the usual signification of the phrase, *הַנְּשָׂאִים בְּעֶדָה*. In *Exod. xvi. 22* it denotes, the ELDERS OF THE CONGREGATION. When this author comes to the mystery of this vail, he considers it both in a good and in a bad sense. In good sense, representing Christ, who hides the splendour of the Covenant of Works from his people: and, in bad sense, pointing out the darkness of their minds.

ous interpreters: And, I acknowledge, there considerable difficulty in both: But the matter made still more difficult by reason of the unhappy turn given it in most translations. The case seems to stand thus, When Moses drew

at the double vail being purely ideal, the double mystery falls of course. Our translators supply the word VAIL, in verse 33. but very improperly. Literally it is, And Moses finished speaking with them; and he put vail on his face." The reason why they put in this supplement was, as they imagined, to reconcile Moses with Paul. But, as a judicious author observes, it is wholly unnecessary, "Ex Exod. xxxiv. 30—35. liquere existimo, radiasse vultum Mosis, quum a Deo redux cum Israelitis colloqueretur; imo Mosen aperto vultu populo mandata Dei manifestasse, et postea demum vultum veloxisse. Hujus rei causam tradit apostolus. Sc. vultum velamine operuisse: ne Israelitæ viderent finem splendoris, quem vultus emittebat. Splendebat vultus ejus, gloria divina, quam cum Deo colloquens viderat, illustrasse. Hic splendor postea periisse, Mose vero ad Deum redeunte, renovatus esse videtur. Moses igitur, cui splendor hic apud populum duræ cervicis multum auctoritatis conciliabat, imposito velamine impediabat, ne eum hujus splendoris viderent. Periisse hunc splendorem docet quoque Paulus, ver. 7. commemorans, τὸ ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ τῇ καταργεῖσθαι. Sic elegans est nexus cum r. 12. Dicit ibi Paulus: Se multa uti parrhesia, quod perdurantem esse gloriam τῆς διακονίας τῷ πνεύματι r. 9, 11, 18. Mose vero defuisse hanc parrhesiam, si sciuerit splendorem vultus sui, ut et splendorem τῆς διακονίας τῆς καταργεῖσθαι esse pereuntem, ver. 8, 11. Parrhesiæ oppositus est pudor. Qui vero pudore tangebant, velare caput solebant. Vide Jer. xiv. 3. Esth. vi. — Sic ergo Paulus dicit: Manere velamen in lectione veteris testamenti, quoniam ignorarent Judæi, illud Christo esse abrogatum." G. D. Kypke, Ob. Sac. in T. Tom. II. p. 246. 247.

near unto the congregation, they were so struck with the refulgence of his face, that they durst not approach him; but, at Moses's desire, first Aaron, with the rulers of the congregation, and then all the congregation, came near; and he gave them in command all that the Lord had spoken to him in the mount. And Moses finished speaking with them; and put a vail on his face. This was the state of matters when Moses finished the administration of this covenant; but, as they resigned themselves unto the sovereign will of God, as in the foregoing covenant, it behooved Moses to enter into the temporary tabernacle, to learn the will of God as to this matter. When he went in, he took off the vail; so that the divine presence added a new lustre unto his countenance. And, when he came out, he spoke unto the children of Israel that which was commanded him: And the children of Israel saw that the skin of his face shone. But, as this lustre abated, he covered his face with a vail, to conceal it from Israel. The design of this splendor, at first, was to give dignity and authority to the Mosaic legislation; but it had also another, and a typical signification. Some consider this glory as typical of the glory of Christ, especially at his transfiguration; others, of the glory of the New Testament œconomy. Some understand this splendor as a display of the glory of the Covenant of

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of Works. That this transaction is called the MINISTRATION OF DEATH, as the Covenant of Works was greatly predominant in it is readily granted ; but that the glory of it belonged unto the Covenant of Works can never be proved. This splendor was intended to conciliate authority to Moses, as a typical mediator : and, by it, to typify the glory of the New Testament lawgiver ; so that both the glory of Christ, and of the gospel œconomy, are compared to this glory, and preferred to it, by the Apostle. The vail was a representation of the darkness and imperfection of that minor state : And as the darkness of it was the occasion, not the cause, of the blindness of the Jews, in the days of the Apostle, he makes an easy transition to the vail of darkness that was on their heart.

I SHALL now make some REFLECTIONS on what has been explained,

1. THE saints of God themselves may sometimes violate their most solemn engagements, very soon after they have made them. It was but about forty days after the most solemn covenanting at Sinai, that Aaron, and the greater part of the covenanters with him, brake that covenant, in the most shameful manner. And would to God the like scene had not been too often re-acted in later times. These same covenanters,

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venanters, who were cheerful and ready in taking the national covenant, in the year 1596*, were soon guilty of violating it. The like scene was also re-acted, by many covenanters, in the year 1638. And, to come still nearer our own times, did not some of the most eminent covenanters, in the year 1743, relinquish these very engagements, in April 1747. Plain and incontestible as the facts are, by which this awful truth is established, our separating brethren, who espouse the Burghs-oath, affect to deny it. Say they, 'The great **ERSKINES** were too good men to be guilty of breaking covenant with the Most High! This is the strength of the cause, indeed. But can we be better assured of the faintship of an Erskine, or a Fisher, than of the faintship of Aaron? Or, Were the Erskines, excellent as they were, secured from apostacy, in a manner superior to the Apostles?—Do we not find Peter guilty of dissimulation, even after he had entered on the work of his apostleship? If such a pillar as an infallible teacher might fall, in respect of his personal conduct, why is it not possible for the strongest pillars among fallible teachers to be likewise shaken?

2. COVENANTERS frequently violate their engagements, by falling back into those very sins from which they have been but lately re-

* See Calderwood's History, p. 317.

formed

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formed. So gross was Israel's infatuation, that they wished to be conducted into the promised land by those gods from whom they had been redeemed. They saw, that those gods could not deliver the Egyptians; yet they vainly expected, that they could protect and direct them. Neither the impotence and inutility of those deities, on the one hand; nor their own sacred engagements on the other, could be a barrier against the torrent of their apostacy. How often, alas! How often do professors return, like the dog to his vomit; and, like the swine that were washed, unto their wallowing in the mire!

3. SOLEMN CONFESSION, especially of such sins as are formal breaches of preceding covenants, ought to precede covenant-renovation. Moses was employed, to good purpose, in this duty, previous to his receiving the draught of this covenant.

4. THE name of God, as a sin-pardoning God, gives great encouragement unto the acknowledgment of sin. God announced himself, The Lord God—forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. Moses improved this noble character: He found such a grace in it, as filled the soul with shame and evangelical contrition of mind.

5. COVENANT

5. COVENANT ENGAGEMENTS ought so framed, as to strike directly and exp against those sins that are most prevalent time and place in which they are made most likely to beset those who enter into engagements. There are two kinds of covenant engagements with which wicked men bear a little, although they count every one superfluous: The first is, Such as do not condemn any but very remote evils; and if they have no present temptation to prove. For example, not a few seem to approve of Israel's explicit condemnation of idolatry; they would not say much against a condemnation of some of the grosser abominations of Popery: But a condemnation of PRESENT EVILS is always a torment to them who are on the face of the earth. Again, they would put up with covenant engagements provided they be kept private; and do not amount, like Noah's, unto a condemnation of the world lying in wickedness. But neither these can consist with the model afforded by the history before us. The sins into which Israel had fallen are especially mentioned, and others condemned only by consequence and application. As they had sinned by imitating Egyptian idolatry, so they covenanted against it,—against all imitation of it, or complicity with it, whether Egyptian or Canaanite.

6. THE great discouragement of covenanters, which originates in their unsteadfastness, is no just argument against the practice itself. Were covenanting God's ordinance, say some, and his work, he would not suffer men to break it down so soon after they have been employed in building it up: But, who can doubt if the Sinai Covenant were God's work? And who can deny but it was broken soon after it was made? If we attend carefully unto God's work, we will find, that he has, seemingly, permitted Satan to crush his work almost in the very bud: His image was not long set up in this lower world before it was broken down by the fall. The more glorious the work is, the sooner, and the keener, will the attack upon it be; and though the enemies of God should apparently prevail, and his work, according to our view, appear to be quite marred; yet it will be really mended, being raised up with superior advantage, on the one hand; and his name will be glorified, by the wickedness of his enemies, and the weakness of his friends, on the other.

7. WHEN persons and churches are called unto the duty of covenanting, they are also frequently called unto separation from such professors as are tinged with the sins of the times, and persist in refusing to be reclaimed. Such were the circumstances of Moses, and those

those covenanters who joined with him at this time: They made a thorough separation from those idolaters who worshipped the golden calf. When the service of God cannot be carried on in connection with backsliders, then persons, who have a conscience, must make a choice, Whether they will part with their duty, and a good conscience, or with their companions: And they are at no loss what part to choose.

DISSERTATION VI.

ON THE

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL,

ON THE PLAINS OF MOAB.

D E U T. xxix. 10 — 15.

SEEING it seemed good to the Holy Ghost to describe,—The Parties of this Covenant.—The Parts of it.—The Occasions of it.—And, its Confirmations. We shall dwell a little on each of these; and then subjoin a few Reflections on the whole.

FIRST, We shall attend unto the PARTIES of this Covenant: And Moses was instructed to make it with Israel;

1. IN the name of the LORD THEIR GOD:
“That thou shouldst enter into covenant with
THE LORD THY GOD*.”

* Deut. xxix. 12.

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2. THE other party is declared to be such as stood before the Lord that day, with the generations to come, represented by them. They are distributed into the following classes: —“Your CAPTAINS of your tribes*.” So our translation has it. I find it otherwise rendered by Ainsworth: He translates it, “Your HEADS of your tribes†: And I find the same term rendered HEADS in a parallel text: “And with you there shall be a man of every tribe: every one HEAD of the house of his fathers‡.” They are also styled PRINCES. Says a modern author, “These Princes were chief captains, or generals, in time of war; and chief magistrates in time of peace: Not unlike Peers of the realm, and Lords-Lieutenants of the county§.” These persons were the highest order in the civil state; but not too high to submit to God’s yoke. —“Your ELDERS||.” There is more

* Dent. xxix. 10.

† See his translation, in his Annot. edit. 1639.

‡ Numb. i. 4. שׂרֵי. § In Numb. vii. 2. They are styled PRINCES. See Lowman on the civil government of the Hebrews, p. 74. Etiam Sigonius de Repub. Heb. Lib. VII. cap. v.

|| Dent. xxix. 10. זְקֵנִים. This order of persons is frequently mentioned in Old Testament history. Abraham had an officer, who bore this description, in his family, Gen xxiv. 2. Our translation styles him, “The eldest servant in his family;” and not improperly. Pharaoh had a servant of this kind likewise, Gen. i. 7. There were not only domestic, but also elders, belonging to larger societies, whether cities or commonwealths.

Of

more difficulty in this term than the former one. It was first intended to denote persons of advanced age; but it is more frequently expressive of an office, whether in family, church, or commonwealth. The Church was, by this time, changed from her domestic to her congregational state: Hence, I am apt to conclude, that the term denotes both civil and ecclesiastical rulers.—“Your OFFICERS*.” As for the officers, “they were (says a modern author), according to the account given of them by Maimonides and the Rabbins, much like those whom the Roman law calls OFFICIALES, and EXECUTORES, and the New Testament OFFICERS, who attended the court, to keep the people in order, with a staff and a whip; and to execute the orders and decrees of the judges†.”—A fourth class are, “All the MEN of Israel:” That is, all the males which belonged unto the congregation, who were obliged to attend the celebration of the

Of the former sort we read, Dent. xxv. 8. of the latter, Gen. i. 7. Numb. xxii. 4. 7. Wherever the Church of God obtained, there were elders both civil and ecclesiastical: Israel, in particular, had an ecclesiastical government, distinct from the state. For proof this, the reader may, in the mean time, consult Gillespie's Aaron's Rod Blossoming, Lib. I. chap. iii. Leidekker de Repub. Hebræor. Lib. II. cap. vii, viii.

* שְׂרִיר. † See JENNINGS Antiquities, Vol. I. p. 36, 37. The substance of which is taken from Fuller's Miscellan. Lib. III. cap. xix. Johan. Nic. Not. in Sigon. Lib. VII. cap. vii.

solemn

solemn feasts. The males may be mentioned in this arrangement, as being next in dignity unto the former class.—“Your **LITTLE ONES**.” These are such little ones as the males covenanted for, even as they covenanted for them at circumcision; and as parents still covenant for their children at baptism.—“Your **WIVES**.” Females, even such as were married, and had husbands to answer for them in civil things, were not exempted from this oath, as it was a religious one. Females have been exempted from oaths of allegiance, in all ages, and in all countries, unto civil rulers; but it was fit they should enter into this covenant not only in regard of their personal interest in it, but also as examples unto the Church in future times. This example was accordingly imitated in the days of Nehemiah; and deserves our imitation in succeeding times.—Another class of covenanters are, “Thy **STRANGERS**.” These strangers were probably profelytes; and had received circumcision, the initiating seal of the Abrahamic covenant. Though these persons were bond-men, yet they were free to enter into the Lord’s covenant; though they were the lowest rank in the commonwealth, yet not below God’s notice.—In one word, This covenant was made with succeeding, as well as with the present generation: “Neither with you only do I make this covenant, and this oath: But with him that standeth here with us this day before the **Lord our**.”

our God : And also with him that is NOT HERE with us this day." The present generation might, and did covenant for succeeding ones ; as the generations to come were part of themselves : And it has been allowed by all societies, whether civil or ecclesiastic, that bonds and covenants are of as real obligation on said societies, as upon those individuals who, at first, entered into them. To maintain the contrary, implies the greatest absurdity in itself ; and, if reduced to practice, would be followed with the most fatal consequences in society.

SECONDLY, The PARTS of this Covenant deserve to be considered in the next place. Here I shall,—1. Consider the two Capital Articles specified.—And, 2. Shew what Reference this Covenant bore unto former Transactions,

I. THE Articles of this Covenant: And,

1. ON the part of the Son of God, He promisseth, " TO BE UNTO THEM A GOD*."

2. ON the part of Israel, They are bound to " be unto him a people."—I would observe, That this implies privileges, as well as duty. When God demanded this engagement, he put an eminent and distinguished honour upon them, not only by admission to outward privi-

* See Dissert. II. Part iii.

leges in the Church, but also by being admitted unto special fellowship with himself. What a happy people are the Lord's people. — This imports the most solemn dedication to God. As there is a special claim on the part of God, so also a solemn acknowledgment of the justice of it on the part of his children. When persons declare they are the Lord's people, they consecrate their persons, their services, and their ALL, indeed, unto his glory. The rule of this service was not only the judicial law, by which they were governed as a body politic; but also the moral and ceremonial laws, respecting both their private and ecclesiastical capacities: "Keep, therefore, the words of this covenant, and do them. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, the ten commandments." Nor can this dedication imply less than a solemn renunciation of all God's rivals, whether internal or external: For the claims of Jehovah and those of his rivals are absolutely incompatible.

II. I SHALL now enquire what Reference this Covenant bore unto former Engagements: And it contained a formal renovation of them,

1. As God transacted with Israel as a God already in covenant with them, by virtue of the covenants he had made with their fathers. As God covenanted with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

Jacob, for their seed, as well as for themselves; so the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were bound to take hold of the infinite Jehovah, not only as their own God, but also as the God of their fathers; saying, Thou art my God, I will praise thee; my fathers God, I will exalt thee. The covenanted character and relation, which Israel was called to accept, and improve on the Plains of Moab, did not commence in the last year of Moses's life; but had been frequently announced in former transactions. Hence, God himself speaks of the ESTABLISHMENT of this relation between him and them: "That he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself; and that he may be unto thee a God, as he said unto thee, and as he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob*."

2. THIS covenant was a renovation of former ones, as God considered the covenanters as already a covenanted-people; having formerly covenanted in the loins of their fathers. They were considered as the successors of those patriarchs unto whom Jehovah had sworn; and of those covenanters unto whom he had spoken in the Sinai Covenant, according to the text just now quoted. Hence this transaction engrossed all preceding ones.

* Deut. xxix 13.

* Y y

3. As

3. As the matter of this covenant engrossed the substance of former transactions, as we have seen; so the making of it strongly marked its relation to them: Said Moses, "That he may ESTABLISH thee to-day for a people unto himself." His right to them, as a people, did not commence that day; but there was a renewed claim of it on his part, and a renewed acknowledgment of it on theirs: For the word rendered ESTABLISH does not mean to give existence unto any thing; but to confirm, or renew, that which had a previous existence, as we have formerly shewn*.

THIRDLY,

* Dissert. I. Part i. To set this matter beyond all possibility of doubt, I shall attend, for a moment, unto Moses's judgment on this head, Deut. vii. 9. "Know, therefore, the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God; who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations." Verse 11. "Thou shalt, therefore, keep the commandments and the statutes, and the judgments which I command thee this day, to do them." Verse 12. "Wherefore it shall come to pass, If ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep UNTO THEE the covenant, and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers." No language can be more plain than Moses's testimony, declaring, That God kept his covenant which he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Most High God considered himself as still bound by the promises which he made, and the oath which he swore unto these patriarchs,—he considered himself as bound unto their seed, some hundreds of years after they were dead, as well as unto themselves when in life. Hence, though the Sinai Covenant had fewer promises than precepts; yet it was not without

THIRDLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant are now to be considered.

1. THIS covenant was established after God completed the system of ceremonial worship. When Israel covenanted at Sinai, even a second time, they resigned themselves unto the sovereign will of God, as to what ordinances he should be pleased to institute, as well resolved, in the strength of divine grace, to observe such as were formally instituted: Accordingly, the last time they covenanted, the tabernacle was not erected, nor the system

promises, even of its own; and, especially, enriched with all the promises which belonged to former covenants: Or, if we take this declaration as referring unto the transaction on the Plains of Moab, then it carries the promises still further forward; and they are carried forward, indeed, not only as far as the death of Jesus; but also to the latest posterity of the members of the Gospel Church. The promises of the Abrahamic covenant (all excepting those belonging unto the incarnation and death of the Messiah, and these things are a matter of fact), being all made over by Christ unto the Gospel Church, Acts iii. 25. "Ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." And Paul assures us, The law was added unto the promise, Gal. iii. 19. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made:" The meaning of which is, The law was added to the promise, so as that both taken together should form a rule of faith and practice unto the Church, to prevent her from sin, until the system should be changed, in some measure, by the coming of the promised Seed.

of ordinances which belonged to it finished ; but before this time the Lord's work had been advanced among the congregation of Israel, by the erection of the tabernacle, the consecration of the priests, and the law of sacrifices. Now, as these branches of reformation were included in former covenants, by consequence at least, it was proper they should be formally engrossed in this new transaction.

2. THIS covenant-renovation obtained after Israel had been guilty of many transgressions, murmurings, and rebellions against the Lord. Soon after they had suffered so smartly for making and worshipping the golden calf, they involved themselves again in the most awful guilt : For they had not marched more than three days, at the direction of the pillar of fire, and of the pillar of cloud, after the tabernacle had been erected, till they murmured because of the way. And the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled ; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them who were in the uttermost parts of the camp. This fire was scarcely quenched, at the interposition of Moses, before the mixed multitude, and even the whole congregation of the children of Israel, lusted for the flesh, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, and the garlic of Egypt ; and, at the same time, loathed the manna, by which they had been so liberally supplied in the

the wilderness*. God granted their desire, sending them abundance of quails; but, while the flesh was between their teeth, the Lord smote them with a great plague, of which many died. And they called the name of the place KIBROTH-HATTAAVAH: That is, the Graves of Concupiscence; because there they buried the people who lusted†. About four months after, they again murmured against Moses and Aaron, as well as spake of stoning them, together with Caleb and Joshua, on account of the evil report, which had been returned by the major part of the spies sent to search out the promised land: Said they, "Would to God we had died in the land of Egypt; or, would to God we had died in the wilderness. Wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return to Egypt? Let us make a Captain and return into Egypt!" As if they had not been long enough in Egypt already. The punishment which God inflicted on the unbelieving spies was death: And that which he inflicted on such as believed them was deprivation of entering into the promised land. Accordingly, they lingered out the space of forty years (commencing at their departure out of Egypt, a year for each day the spies were surveying the promised land), in the wilderness;

* Numb. xi. 4—6. † Numb. xi. 31—34.

and,

and, during this space, all the congregation of Israel, from twenty years and upwards, fell, except Caleb and Joshua. The particular providences which befel Israel, and their rebellion against the Lord, for the first two years of the forty, are pretty fully enumerated; but those which befel them the last thirty-eight years are more slightly touched. Among their provocations and plagues, however, which obtained in this last period, may be reckoned the rebellion of Korah, and Israel's association with Midian: The former of which cost that congregation near fifteen thousand men; and the latter not fewer than twenty-four thousand. There were probably many other provocations of which Israel was guilty, during their forty years peregrination; but these are sufficient to shew the patience and long-suffering, as well as the justice of God, in his conduct towards them. And each of them was an evidence of the divine sovereignty, in admitting the seed of such sinners into covenant with himself, on the one hand; and, on the other, these things also filled up that confession of sin in which Israel was employed prior to this covenant-renovation *.

* Moses not only preached on their transgressions, as is evident from the former part of the book of Deuteronomy; but he also reminded them of their TEMPTATIONS, by which they tempted the Lord immediately before this transaction, Deut. xxix. 3. as well as of all God's gracious interpositions in their behalf: To inspire them with repentance on the one hand, and gratitude on the other.

3. THIS

3. THIS covenant-renovation took place after that generation had been removed by death, which God had brought forth out of the land of Egypt. God had executed his threatening, in which he said, "Surely there shall not one of these men, of this evil generation, see the good land, which I swear to give unto your fathers." Seeing the former race of covenanters were removed, it was proper to allow the then present generation an opportunity of coming into covenant, to fill up their room.

4. THIS covenant-renovation obtained after Moses had delivered various sermons to the congregation of Israel, on those covenant-engagements under which he had brought them in the loins of their fathers. In these discourses, which Moses delivered, he recorded the matter of the covenant *; and then entered into a more minute explication of particular articles. The matter of the covenant, as we have seen, is the ten commandments. The first precept of it he explained chapter sixth †, &c. And these articles were not only recited and explained; but also applied unto the particular

* Deut. v. 6——21.

† See Ainsworth's Argument of the book of Deuteronomy. The second precept is explained chap. xii. The third, chap. xiii. The fourth, chap. xv. and xvi. The fifth, chap. xvii. and xviii. The sixth, chap. xix, xx, and xxi. The seventh, chap. xxii. The eighth, chap. xxiii, xxiv, xxv.

steps of conduct with which Israel was chargeable : And their transgressions of these articles were matter of confession at this time, with a view unto this covenant-renovation. By this sermon, Moses likewise set an example unto ministers of the gospel, in all succeeding ages, to prepare their people for covenant-renovation, by preaching on the nature and extent of past and present covenant-engagements. Many in our day, indeed, are extremely weary of sermons of this kind ; nor would they have been better pleased had they made a part of Moses's auditory : But discourses are not always worst when men weary most of them ; nor are the pleasers of men always the most faithful servants of the living God.

5. MOSES brought Israel forward to the duty of covenanting just before he was removed to the other world. He began his sermon on covenanting on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt. It is probable the sermon continued several days. Against the end of the month, however, Moses died. He brought the young generation under personal engagements unto the Lord, that the congregation might be left on a proper footing to Joshua ; and so taught the servants of God to have a generous concern, not only for the present, but also for the rising generation ;
that

that race unto race might praise him, and shew forth his mighty deeds.

FOURTHLY, We shall consider the **CONFIRMATIONS** of this Transaction.

1. IT was dispensed by Moses, and accepted by Israel: "And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them," &c. "And Moses spake these words unto all Israel*." As the congregation was assembled for this purpose; so we have no reason to imagine that any of them refused to accept.

2. IT was, I humbly judge, a written covenant. I readily grant, that we have only an abstract of it transmitted to us: But no reason can be assigned, I presume, why it should not be written at length, as well as the two foregoing, and all succeeding ones.

3. IT was a sworn covenant. This is plainly declared by the inspired historian: "That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and INTO HIS OATH." Again, "Neither with you only do I make this covenant, and this OATH†." The question is, By whom

* Deut. xxix. 2. compared with Deut. xxxi. 1.

† This manner of expression is usual enough in the Old Testament, as in Ecc. viii. 2. "I counsel thee to keep the King's commandment, and that in regard of the

whom was it sworn? By Israel, or by Jehovah? To me the former seems evidently intended; for he is said to enter into the oath of the Lord his God, which cannot imply less than to swear it. Nor is it any objection against this sense, that the oath is called his oath,—Jehovah's oath: For it may be called HIS, as it was of HIS appointment, as well as including an appeal unto his omniscience, and omnipotence, to reward sincerity, and chastise perfidy.

THE last thing proposed is, A few REFLECTIONS on the whole.

1. WE may learn to adore divine sovereignty, especially in God's conduct towards his Church and people. He might justly have said, "What has such a perfidious generation to do to take my covenant in their lips? Have I not been grieved by you, and your fathers, for the space of forty years? But, beyond the expectation of angels and men, he caused them to enter into the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers; "that he may establish thee to-day for a people to himself." What a people is this, that God should take them for his people!—What sovereignty has he displayed to this present generation of covenanters?—Covenanters sprung

the OATH OF GOD." The oath of loyalty to the King is styled the oath OF GOD; as he is the object of worship, to whom the appeal is made, and by whom the allegiance is pledged.

from

from covenant-breakers! What a miracle of forbearance is it, that this generation is not consumed! There is something so striking in our case, that it seems even to exceed that of Israel at the Plains of Moab; yea, it has scarce a parallel in the annals of providence.

2. COVENANTERS should be carefully instructed as to those vows which are upon them, in order to prepare them for covenant-renovation. This is well warranted by the conduct of Moses. He dwelt upon the subject;—he applied it unto the particular circumstances of his audience;—he laboured to the utmost to make them understand it. The subject was, every whit, as complicated and difficult as the present bond; but Moses did not despair of making a stupid people understand it.—Some imagine it is best to keep themselves free (as **they** speak) when they are free: But, were **such** persons suitably instructed, as to what **vows** are upon them, they would see, that **there** is no one duty from which they can be exempted, by abstaining from covenanting. When persons are previously under solemn vows, as was the case with Israel; and as is the case with us, they are already bound unto every duty: and nothing but the formality of a personal adherence is a-wanting. The obligation, however, is inviolable, whether we acknowledge it or not;—whether we add this personal adherence or not.

3. **THIS** subject discovers unto us the true nature of covenant-renovation. Covenant-renovation necessarily presupposeth an acknowledgment of all previous covenant-obligations; an avowed adherence unto them; with an addition of such articles as present circumstances dictate to be requisite. 'This covenant was a renovation of all the patriarchal covenants, as well as the two Sinai transactions: And it contained an application of them unto the circumstances of the covenanters then present, with such alterations as fitted their peculiar circumstances; being a people ready to enter on the enjoyment of the promised land. Former covenants respected chiefly their wandering state; but this had a principal respect unto a settled condition: Hence, there were some things in these transactions unnecessary in this one; such as, the promise of safe conduct through the wilderness, the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud for that effect. These were superseded by the promise of his abode in the place which he should choose to put his name there, and unto which he would assemble the congregation.

DISSERTATION VII.

ON THE

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL, AT SHECHEM.

J O S H. xxiv. 1 — 28.

IN taking a view of this Covenant, I shall shew,
—I. By whom this Covenant was Dispensed.
—II. To whom it was Administered.—III. I
shall consider the Matter of the Covenant.—
IV. The Occasions of it.—V. The Solemnities
by which it was Confirmed.—VI. Concluding
with some Reflections on the whole.

FIRST, I shall shew by whom this Cove-
nant was DISPENSED. The inspired prophet
assures us, this was no other than Joshua :
“ And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel
together, to Shechem,” &c. “ And Joshua said
unto all the people *.” Joshua was a great

* Josh. xxiv. 1, 2.

general and a just judge; but these did not exhaust the whole of his character: He was no less famous, as he was vested with the prophetic office in like manner. As he ruled for God, so he spake in the name of the Lord: And it was in the discharge of the prophetic office that he dispensed this covenant to the children of Israel. This is evident, not only from his using the prophetic style, "thus saith the Lord;" but also from the manner in which he addressed them immediately before they gave their consent unto this covenant. He did not issue forth this covenant as a royal edict from a supreme magistrate; but he addressed their conscience, and commanded them to make a choice according to it: "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve *." From this consideration it is plain, that Joshua's covenant was not a political one,—designed for the regulation of the state; but a religious one,—intended for the preservation and purity of the Church †.

SECONDLY, I shall now shew to whom this Covenant was ADMINISTERED: And these

* Josh. xxiv. 15.

† Her. Wits. de Prophetia, cap. xviii. Thes. 7. "Deinde id quoque notandum, prophetico impulsu omnia hæc a Josua peracta fuisse. Inchoat enim orationem suam formula prophetis solenni. SIC AIT JEHOVA, et Jehovam ipsum prima, ut aiunt grammatici, persona loquentem introducit."

were

were, "The Elders of the people,—their Heads,—their Judges,—their Officers,—and ALL the People *." All these orders of persons have been considered formerly, except those who are styled JUDGES †. The title was applied unto the chief magistrate until Israel sought a King; but, in the text, it is evidently applied to inferior magistrates. A learned commentator explains it of such as were like LIVING LAWS unto the citizens ‡. And a famous antiquarian, deeply studied in the Hebrew republic, reckons they were prefects in cities; and this was their common name, whether in a lower, or in a higher sphere; whether entrusted with a more limited, or more extensive power: He also observes, that they were called out from among the elders for the discharge of that office §.

THIRDLY, I shall now consider the MATTER of this Covenant: And it consists in a proposal made by Joshua, and the acceptance of that proposal by Israel, with a resolution to abide by it.

I. WE have a proposal which Joshua made unto all Israel,—a proposal expressed and insisted on by him: "And if it seem evil unto

* Josh. xxiv. 1. † שופטים, SHOPHETIM.

‡ Masius in Josh. xxiii. 2. § Leidekker de Repub. Heb. Lib. VII. cap. i. § 4. cum notis.

you to serve the Lord, choose ye, this day, whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood; or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye now dwell; but as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord." And when Israel accepted of the proposal, he insisted on the extent and importance of it,—insisting also on the danger of failing in their engagements: "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins. If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good *." Here I may observe, more particularly,

I. THE Duties unto which Joshua engaged the Israelites. They are,—Heart-inclination unto God: "Incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel †." This duty is last mentioned by Joshua, but it is first intended; being the foundation of all that are specified: And it is expressive of the soul's entire and unreserved compliance with God's gracious proposals in his promise, which contains a full and complete salvation;—with all his holy precepts, as the measure of obedience;—and all the methods of his providence, for their guidance in the

* Josh. xxiv. 19, 20. † Josh. xxiv. 23.

world. Inclination of heart unto Jehovah, denotes faith's propensity towards him, as its great object;—faith's rest in him, and its influence over all the affections of the soul.—Joshua engaged them to “fear the Lord*.” Even such fear as is consistent with heart-inclination to the object of it. Fear sometimes comprehends the whole of Old Testament service; as fear was greatly predominant in that dispensation: But here it is distinguished from obedience; of consequence, taken in a more limited sense. It imports that filial reverence which has the holiness and jealousy of God for the object of it; as appears from Joshua's proposing these perfections unto their consideration. —Another duty, unto which Joshua took Israel engaged, was, to put away every strange god, whether they were the gods of Egypt, from whence they came, or the gods of Canaan, where they were now settled, or the domestic idols which might have been concealed till that time among them, notwithstanding their engagements against idolatry †. Such is the fervour of God's jealousy for his worship and honour, that the worship of the true God and that of Baul can never coalesce into one system.—Joshua engaged them unto the service and worship of the true God: “Serve him in sincerity and truth.”—“Choose ye this day whom ye will serve ‡.” The measure of this

* Josh. xxiv. 14.

† Josh. xxiv. 14, 15.

‡ Josh. xxiv. 14, 15.



service was the Mosaic law : Nor was Joshua's language greatly different from that of Moses, when he preached on covenanting. Said Moses, " Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and SERVE him, and swear by his name : " And " Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve : and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name *." Now, as Joshua used similar terms, we may conclude, he also fixed similar ideas to them with Moses, and was advancing the work which Moses had begun.

2. WE may notice the manner in which Joshua insists on this proposal : " If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve †." This manner of proposal was intended to strike them with the deeper conviction of their obligations to serve God, on the one hand ; and the absurdity of forsaking him on the other. Joshua was fully persuaded, that, if they could but once be brought to judge the matter with impartiality, the effect of their deliberations would be, a determination for God, and against every idol. Joshua was also directed unto this method of proposal, as God inclines all covenanters to offer themselves willingly, or free willingnes^ses unto him. Again, Joshua pointed out the difficulty of serving God in a manner suited to his

* Deut. vi. 13. and x. 20. † Josh. xxiv. 15.

holiness, on the one hand ; and the danger of serving strange gods on the other : “ Ye cannot serve the Lord : for he is an holy God ; he is a jealous God ; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins. If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good *.” Should any ask, How this warning consists with the former proposal to serve God ? It may be answered, That the meaning of the warning is, Ye cannot serve the Most High God, and, at the same time, serve strange gods : Such is the unspotted purity of Jehovah,—such his flaming jealousy, that he cannot admit a rival in his honour and worship. If any of you forsake the true God, and serve strange gods, he shall not do it with impunity : Should the whole congregation do it, their correction shall be as public as their transgression. In one word, Joshua set them a good pattern of service : “ As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord.” He was past all peradventure, that this was, by much, the best course.

* Josh. xxiv. 19. 20. There is a signal beauty in the inspired original, especially when speaking of the name of God. It is to this purpose, “ Ye cannot serve Jehovah ; for Elohim, the Holies, is he,” &c. The terms **יהוה** **אלהים** are joined in construction with **אחד**. The former are in the plural number, importing a plurality of persons ; the latter in the singular number, denoting an unity of essence.

II. As often as these duties were proposed to the congregation, so often did they accept of the proposal, and resolve to abide by it.

1. THEY rejected, with abhorrence, the service of the gods which their fathers served on the other side of the flood, and that of the gods of the Amorites: "And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods." This cannot imply less than an engagement unto a most steady adherence unto him,—unto his truth, as the matter of their profession; and his precepts, as the rule of their obedience.

2. WHEN Joshua pointed out the danger of mixing the service of the true God with that of his rivals, they readily vowed their resolution of obedience unto God only: "And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord." We will serve him only; we will serve him wholly, and for ever. We will serve him at the expense of casting away every abomination—What have we any more to do with idols?

3. THEY pledged the obedience of faith, yea faith, in the most unreserved manner, unto the whole of God's testimony. The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." Thus, the measure of their obedience, the principle of it, and the reason it, corresponded with

with God's gracious intention towards them, and the pains he had bestowed on them.

FOURTHLY, The next consideration is, The **OCCASIONS** of this Covenant. And many most interesting events obtained between this transaction and that on the Plains of Moab, which prepared the way for it. We shall mention a few of them.

1. THE waters of Jordan had been most miraculously divided, and the Hebrew general had conducted the congregation of Israel over, as on dry ground, into the promised land. This miracle was, at once, an accomplishment of the promise made unto Abraham, and a type of the believer's deliverance from the sting of death, by the **BREAKER'S** going up before them.

2. THIS covenant-renovation took place after the notable celebration of the Jewish sacraments. These ordinances had not been observed for the last thirty-eight years of Israel's peregrinations in the wilderness. The reasons of this non-observance are not easily ascertained. Setting aside the vain imaginations of the Jews, there are two opinions which divide the greatest part of authors on this subject. One class of writers imagine these were forebom, because of the danger to which infants would have been exposed by their wounds,

wounds, had they been circumcised, while continually travelling from place to place in the wilderness*. Another class of authors† ascribe the non-observance of this ordinance unto the apostacy of Israel, on the one hand; and the righteous judgment of God on the other. The neglect of circumcision being necessarily followed with the disuse of the passover, and other sacrifices; for uncircumcised persons could not be admitted to these ordinances: And the neglect of sacrifice was matter of reproof to their posterity as late as the days of the prophet Amos: "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness, O house of Israel‡." And the reproof is also repeated by Stephen§. The only difficulty is, to know whether this reproof must be taken absolutely or comparatively. Some authors, of good note, insinuate, that the last is the truth in this case; as it is not to be supposed that such a person as Moses would suffer them to live so long in the total neglect of these duties. But no one thing can be more certain, than that Moses permitted them to

* To this class belong Tostatus and Lyranus, among the Papists; Hackspanus, Schmidius, and J. A. Oslander, among the Lutherans; as well as Pool and Stackhouse, among our own countrymen.

† Such as Augustin, Calvin, Masius, Diodati, Cloppenburg, the question is fully discussed by the latter, Tom. I. p. 25.

‡ Amos v. 25.

§ Acts vii. 42.

neglect

neglect circumcision, and uncircumcised persons could not offer sacrifice. And, as to those persons who murmured, they were materially, if not formally, excommunicated; therefore, Moses could not admit them unto solemn ordinances upon any other footing than evangelical repentance.

3. **THIS** covenant obtained after God had subdued the Canaanites before his people, and put Israel into possession of their lands. This conquest had been promised unto the covenanted-seed, from the very call of Abraham to this time. Now, if the making of such a promise was an incitement unto covenant-renovation, much more might the fulfilment of it in like manner. The place on which the covenanters stood was the same, or very near the same place, where the patriarch stood when the promise was made to him*. Thus, God glorified

* Gen. xii 6. Josh. xxiv. 1. The ark seems to have been carried from Shiloh to Shechem at this time, that the covenanters might stand before God; that is, before the SANCTUARY OF THE LORD, when they covenanted with him. Vide Calvin in Josh. xxiv. This observation is sufficient to remove the seeming contradiction between verse 1. and verse 26. In the former of which, the tribes of Israel are said to be gathered together at Shechem: In the latter of which, Joshua is said to set up a great stone under an oak, by the SANCTUARY OF THE LORD; and to declare unto the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us." Again, It may be enquired, If the Sanctuary of the Lord was at Shechem,
How

fied his veracity, in bringing his promise to their remembrance in the same place where Abraham had glorified it in believing it.

4. THIS covenant was made a little before Joshua's death. He was well stricken in years before he assembled the congregation for this solemn work: Like Moses, probably, he called them to it in the last year of his life. Like him too, he much wished that Israel might be in a flourishing state, as to their religious circumstances, at his demise: Therefore, he set about this ordinance, as the means of their establishment: "And it came to pass, after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died; being an hundred and ten years old."

How could it be set up near a grove, or an oak; seeing, Deut. xvi. 21. Israel is expressly prohibited from planting a grove, or any trees, near the altar of the Lord? Answer, An occasional bringing of the Sanctuary nigh unto an ancient oak (which was a memorial of former manifestations and covenants), and that for a very short time, did not come within the prohibition. The reason of this prohibition seems to be, that Israel might maintain a testimony against the idolatrous custom of planting groves, for temples unto idols. It is plain, from many places of Scripture, that idolaters worshipped their gods in groves, and under every GREEN TREE. And Pliny assures us of the same, Hist. Lib. XII. cap. i. The Second Law of the twelve tables concerning religion, expressly commanded that which Moses prohibited.

FIFTHLY,

FIFTHLY, The SOLEMNITIES by which this Covenant was confirmed, must be considered in the next place.

1. JOSHUA took them witnesses against each other, in case of covenant-violation: "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves, that ye have chosen you the Lord to serve him: And they said, We are witnesses *." All social worship has this solemnity. In social vows, each covenantor is a witness against his neighbour in case of covenant-violation: And the conversation of such as in any measure keep their vows, as well as the remembrance of those vows themselves (which is preserved by the very sight of fellow-covenantors), cannot but strike the apostate with the bitterest remorse. Hence apostates, who have been covenantors, have a keener malice and enmity against such as retain their integrity, than any other species of the enemies of religion whatever. None have been more cruel persecutors than apostatizing covenantors.

2. THIS covenant was ratified by writing: "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God †." The three preceding covenants were all committed to writing; and

* Josh. xxiv. 22.

† Josh xxiv. 26.

either this covenant, or an abstract of it, was registered along with them. The book in which they were registered was laid up beside the ark, in the most holy place.

3. JOSHUA set up a monument for the commemoration and confirmation of this covenant in like manner: "And Joshua took a great stone and set it up there under an oak, that was by the Sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he hath spoken unto us: it shall be, therefore, a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God *." The **STONE** is said to hear by a prosopopeia, in order un-

* Josh. xxiv. 26, 27. We have already seen, that Jacob erected a monument on a similar occasion (Dissert. IV.): Jacob's pillar, however, was at once an altar and a monument; but this was intended to be a monument only. Monuments were also used, in ancient times, for the ratification of civil contracts; as in the covenant between Jacob and Laban (Gen. xxxi. 45—51): And also between Romulus and Tatius, *τὰντα ὁρκισάν καὶ βαρεὺς ὡς τοῖς ὁρκοῖς ἰδρυσάν*, Jurarunt in hæc mutuo (Romulus et Tatius, viz.) ET JURATI ARAS IN SUPER EXTRUXERANT. Dion. Halicarnas. Lib. II. Nor was this rite unknown in our western isles, in later times: "Ad lævam Carrontis duo terreni sunt tumuli, hominum opera (ut res indicat) ædificati. vulgo Dunipacis appellantur." BUCHAN. Hist. (mihi p. 15.) On the left hand of Carron there are two small hills made of earth, by man's hand (as the thing itself shews) commonly called Duni pacis, i. e. Emblems of Reconciliation.

to remembrance: As if Joshua had said, However this day's work be remembered by you, this stone will be a faithful remembrancer of it. Every one who enquires, wherefore it was set up, will be answered, It was erected when Israel dedicated themselves unto the Lord by the ministry of Joshua. It will be a witness to their honour, upon keeping covenant; and to their shame, in case of violation of it. This is strongly insinuated in the text: "It shall be a witnesses AGAINST you;" for so I would choose to render it *. This will instruct your guilt, should any of you presume to deny it; for witnesses are chiefly necessary when things are controverted.

SIXTHLY, I shall now conclude this subject with a few REFLECTIONS.

1. WE may see the necessity of self-examination unto solemn covenanting. Persons should count the cost, prior to their putting their hand unto this building: They ought to weigh matters fully in the balance of the Sanctuary,—to deliberate, with the most mature deliberation, as ever they would not devour that which is holy, and after vows make enquiry. How

* Pagnin renders כִּנּוּיָא CONTRA VOS; Arias Montanus, IN VOS, which is of the same signification: And it were easy to shew, that the prefix admits of this sense.

much pains did Joshua take to bring these covenanters unto serious consideration of the nature and extent of their engagements. The matters proposed were of infinite concern ; therefore, worthy of every degree of attention of which a human soul is capable. Precipitation in vowing cannot fail to precipitate the person in covenant-violation ; while deliberation and self-examination may, by the blessing of God, be the means of preventing it.

2. RIGHT Covenanting is an act of voluntary obedience. It is the fruit of free choice. Joshua carried the civil sword ; but, on this occasion, he used the sword of his tongue instead of the sword in his hand. He addressed the conscience instead of the fears of the congregation of Israel,—persuading them it was their best interest, as well as their indispensable duty. Every thing on the part of God is most encouraging ; God is willing to bring back his banished ; he has sent his Son to invite them, and his Spirit to incline them : Well, therefore, may they say, “ Ere ever I was aware, my soul made me as the chariots of a willing people.”

3. Good examples have great influence to procure ready obedience. Joshua's example was as excellent as his station was elevated:
And

And religion continued to flourish for some time after his death. Both his doctrine and example were succeeded with the divine blessing: And religion brought to as flourishing a condition as at any time before the ministry of the Baptist. There was not only much religion among those whom Moses trained up by his ministry, which continued all the days of Joshua; but it also retained its vigour all the days of those Elders who were his contemporaries: "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the Elders that outlived Joshua."

4. As all divine service is founded on the nature of God; so a special consideration of his infinite perfections is greatly requisite unto the right performance of obedience. The holiness of God marks the nature of our service: The jealousy of God excludes every, the smallest, degree of hypocrisy from it: The rectoral justice of God sets his interest and that of his rivals at eternal odds; so that none may dream of uniting them with impunity. The mercy of God encourages the miserable to approach him; and the divine plan of atonement opens a door of access unto the guilty. On the other hand, a great part of the corruption which creeps into the worship of God originates in mistaken notions of divine perfections, or inattention unto them. Defection and apostacy usually

usually begins in imagining God to be such a one as ourselves; then it is not difficult to imagine that he will approve of what we execute or devise. Persons giving scope to their own inventions, in the worship of God, are usually mightily pleased with them; and they conclude, that God cannot be displeased with these things which are so pleasing to themselves. At any rate, if persons do not change the glory of the incorruptible God into their own likeness; it is necessary for them to hide various divine perfections from their view, if they continue in rebellion against him; such as his jealousy, his holiness, his faithfulness and truth, as well as his righteousness and justice. Nor are sinners more disposed, by nature, to trust his mercy, for their encouragement, than to contemplate his majesty for their awakening.

DISSER-

DISSERTATION VIII.

ON THE

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL,

BY THE MINISTRY OF DAVID.

1 Chron. xxviii. 8. comp. with 2 Sam. vii. 11—22.
and 1 Chron. xvii. 7—27.

A DILIGENT attendance unto the peculiar circumstances of the Jewish Church is greatly requisite unto the right understanding of this Transaction. I shall,—I. Consider the glorious Party to whom they engaged.—II. Attend unto the Character of the Party engaging.—III. The Covenant between God and David.—IV. The Connection between this Covenant and that Transaction.—V. David's Ministry in this Transaction.—VI. The Matter of this Covenant.—VII. The Occasions of it.—VIII. The Confirmations of it.—And then deduce a few Inferences from the whole.

FIRST,

FIRST, I shall consider the glorious PARTY unto whom the covenanters engaged in this Transaction. He is denominated, "Our God," and "the Lord your God." When Israel covenanted with God, in the days of Moses, he is styled, "the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" nor was that character forgotten on this occasion: Said David, "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of this people, and prepare their heart unto thee*." This was an intimation, not obscure, that he was a God in covenant with them previous unto their personal engagements unto him: That he was still accomplishing his promise made unto these patriarchs; saying, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." It must be observed, however, that he stood in the relation of GOD UNTO THAT CONGREGATION, when they covenanted with him at this time. The covenant between God and Israel as a congregation, being later than that between him and the patriarchs. The Spirit of God directed David to take up with that character which belonged unto the latest transaction, to shew that the Church should take up with the latest state of that testimony which belongs unto her; and prosecute the ends of it in her covenant-engagements.

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 8. compared with chap. xxix. 18.

SECONDLY,

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SECONDLY, The various classes of covenanters are enumerated in the beginning of the chapter *. The reason why the officers of state are enumerated is, because they were assembled to settle the succession unto the throne and kingdom, as well as to renew their covenant with God: But it was under the express consideration of their being the CONGREGATION OF THE LORD, that they covenanted at this time; they were the Congregation of the Lord, as they enjoyed privileges peculiar to his people,—as they observed ordinances of his appointment, and were under solemn obligations to serve him all the days of their life.

THIRDLY, I shall attend unto the COVENANT between GOD and DAVID. There are many hints concerning it in various places of Scripture †. The greater part of the difficulties which attend it may be obviated by answering the following questions:—What Character did David sustain in this Transaction?—

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 1. See what we have said above, *Dissert.* VI. and VII. as to these various orders of persons specified; but Moses seems to view them in their civil, and this historian in their military character. See upon the whole, LOWMAN on the Civil Government of the Hebrews, chap. v.

† 2 Sam. vii. 4—29. 1 Chron. xvii. 3—27. Psal. lxxxix. &c. See, for an explication of these, Ball on the Covenant of Grace, chap. ix. Dr Owen on Heb. i. 5.

What promises were made unto him?—When was it made?—And how ratified?

I. WHAT Character did David sustain in this Covenant? In general, He was God's viceroy over the Theocratical Kingdom,—a type of the Messiah, in his regal dignity: Hence this covenant is, with propriety, called a **Covenant of Royalty**. The analogy between the type and the antitype is manifest.

1. As David was born in an obscure manner at Bethlehem, which was little among the thousands of Judah; so also was Christ. The family was so far below the regal dignity, when the Messiah was born, that his supposed father handled the hatchet, instead of swaying the sceptre. And divine providence so moved the vast machine of the Roman empire, unwieldy as it was, that the family of David, like a small pinion, was just at the point of Bethlehem against the moment, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Micah: "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the thousands of Judah; for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people *."

2. **LIKE** David, the Messiah was the **BE-LOVED SON** of God. God's regard to David

* Micah v. 2.

is more than insinuated in his name; for it signifies BELOVED *. David was the beloved son of God by regeneration and adoption: The Messiah is the SON OF GOD on an infinitely higher account, even his eternal generation. As God announced his love to David in the discharge of his office, so did he also to Christ.

3. LIKE David, the Messiah was consecrated with an eminently glorious anointing.—That David might be a more distinguished type of the Messiah in this respect, he was anointed three different times with material oil. He was anointed by Samuel in Bethlehem, during the life and reign of Saul. And in this he typified that fulness of the Spirit which Christ enjoyed prior to his personal ministry.—Again, David was anointed in Hebron, when he obtained the kingdom of Judah only. And Christ was also anointed with the Holy Ghost, when he began to set up his kingdom in the land of Judea, by his personal ministry.—In fine, David was again anointed when constituted king over all Israel. And, in like manner, the Messiah was enriched with

* *TRI* SONANS AMABILEM ET DILECTUM. Sock. in Voc. “Utrunque etiam dilecti a Deo, argumentum est, Filii Dei, et quidem primo geniti, attributum. DAVIDI, enim per regenerationis, et adoptionis gratiam, qua inter Reges terræ excelluit: CHRISTO, vero per generationis eternæ naturam, qua ita Filius PRIMOGENITUS, ut etiam UNIGENITUS jure nuncupetur,” F. Gomar. Disput. Theol. Diss. xvi. § 8.

a glorious fulness, when he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high *. He was CONSTITUTED both LORD and CHRIST. Jesus was, indeed, a Prince, in point of actual rule, as soon as he had any subjects in this world; and, in this respect, he excels David; but his three-fold unction did immediately precede the glorious exercise of his power in human nature. David was only anointed to the prophetic and regal office; but Christ was anointed unto these, and the priestly office in like manner.—Should any enquire, Whether this covenant was made with David as a saint, or as a king? Whether in his private, or in his public character? I would answer, 'Though it respected his own salvation, as appears from his own confession †; yet it was made with him in the character of a king. The truth is, no one of these considerations can be excluded, though the kingly character is chiefly intended: For it respected David's successors in office, as well as himself; but it does not appear that all of them were saints. The office was typically holy, although the person who bore it was frequently morally impure.

* 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 2 Sam. ii. 4. 2 Sam. v. 3. I am indebted to Cloppenburg for these observations, Vide Disput. Select. Theol. Disput. xvii. § 18. The thought is finely pursued by H. Witsius, in Symbol. Exercit. ix. § 7, 8.

† 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

II. I SHALL now shew, What promises were made unto him.

I. GOD promised him a royal Seed to succeed him in his throne and kingdom. This is, indeed, the capital promise in this covenant: “I will set up thy Seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.”—“And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever *.” “I will raise up thy Seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom,”—“I will establish his throne for ever.”—“I will settle him in mine house, and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore †.” This SEED was Solomon and his successors, in shadow; and a greater than Solomon, in substance. But, to take a narrower survey of this promise, we may observe the subject of it,—A SEED. Solomon is undoubtedly intended as the literal seed: For the promise was given to satisfy David’s mind as to the building of the Temple. The prediction, accordingly, received a circumstantial accomplishment in him:

* 2 Sam. vii. 12, and 16.

† 1 Chron. xvii. 11, 12, and 14. Psal. lxxxix. and cxxxii. much to the same purpose. These promises are meant of Christ, at first instance; and contain an allusion to those mentioned in the history, rather than a repetition of them.

But

But it is also applied to Christ by the Apostle Peter : “ Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.”—“ Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ *.” This promise, then, was an advancement in the first promise, which had been renewed in various others, prior unto this time.—Again, We have the HONOUR to be conferred on this SEED, even a throne and a kingdom. This promise found David on a throne, indeed ; but it secured the succession in his family : And the same thing had been promised, in substance, unto Judah, under the notion of a sceptre and a lawgiver. It included not only civil polity within themselves, but also the ensigns of royalty. Judah could not be deprived of both before the coming of the SHILOH. That tribe was assured of pre-eminence by Jacob’s testament, which was equivalent to a divine promise : But the import and ends of it are not so easily ascertained. The nature of it seems to imply royalty in swaying the SCEPTRE ; and legislation in the high court of the Sanhedrim, with the explication of these laws by the Scribes † : For
if

* Acts ii. 30, and 36.

† JUNIUS, as well as EUSEBIUS, of old, explained this sceptre of the Staff which supported the ensign in the tribe :

if Judah had not always a king of the Davidic line, there was **LEGISLATURE** in the tribe to which it belonged. This pre-eminence commenced when the sceptre was transferred from the family of Saul to that of David. Some have given the sceptre to Judah as early, indeed, as the commencement of the tribe*; but they seem rather to have anticipated God's conveyance: For the oracle itself expressly declares, that it refers to the **LATTER DAYS**. Others have withheld the sceptre till the revolt of the ten tribes from Rehoboam†. But the Jewish sceptre was far more glorious in the hands of David and Solomon, than in those of Rehoboam: It is certainly absurd to suppose, that the enjoyment of the sceptre commenced

tribe: That staff being the badge of distinction for the Prince. And, in this, they are followed by J. **ALTINCIUS**, Bishops **SHERLOCK** and **NEWTON**.—**CALVIN** and **MARS** understand it of the majesty of government, under whatever form. Nor is **Wagenseil** much otherways minded. He reckons the † before *mechokek* may as well be understood disjunctively as a copulative: In which case the sceptre may denote the royal government, and the lawgiver that form which obtained under **Zerubbabel**. These two forms nearly divide the whole time of Judah's government into two equal parts: There being near five centuries in each of them. This sense, which approves itself to me, is defended by **Heidegger**, **Owen**, **Patrick**, &c.

* Eusebius and his followers, above mentioned.

† **CUNÆUS** de Republica Heb. **ABRAH. SCULTET. Exercit. Evangel.** These are refuted by **LEIDEKKER** de **Repub. Heb. Lib. VII. cap. vi.**

at

at a time when the splendor of it was greatly tarnished in the hands of a weak prince. The sceptre and the throne were certainly both given to David, and secured, by this covenant, to his Seed. As this Seed was two-fold, as we have already seen, so there was a two-fold ROYALTY in like manner. The ordinary seed was secured of succession to the earthly throne, and the extraordinary Seed in the enjoyment of that glorious authority which was prefigured by it: The throne being put for all the ensigns of royalty and majesty, comprehending all the glory of the Hebrew monarchy, in the type; and all the exaltation of the Messiah, in the substance.—Finally, We may notice the duration of this HONOUR. This perpetuity is often mentioned in the text: Not fewer than three times, to denote the importance of it *. There is a two-fold perpetuity mentioned in Scripture, and meant in this promise: The duration intended is suited to the kingdom to which it is ascribed. The worldly kingdom continued under monarchy until the Babylonish captivity: and preserved its civil polity (tho' sometimes tributary), and also its sacred rites, until the fulness of time. As to the antitypical kingdom, absolute eternity, in the fullest emphasis of the word, is intended. In other kingdoms, their sceptres have been frequently unrighteously managed, and the thrones

* 2 Sam. vii. 13. and 16.

rushed down into ruin: But, as the glory of this sceptre can never be tarnished by iniquity, so the throne can never be shaken: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from hence forth even for ever *." This promise connected

* If. ix. 7. "St Paul's remarkable comparison, by way of antithesis, between Adam and Christ (Rom. v. 12. 1 Cor. xv. 21.), whom he calls the second Adam, or Man, is well known. But I do not know that the commentators send us to the Old Testament for any thing that may serve to justify the great Apostle in this comparison. And yet, I think, there is a passage in the prayer of David (2 Sam. vii. 19. and 1 Chron. xvii. 17.) which shews, that the Messiah was expected under this very character.— Upon David's pious resolution to build a house for God; which, as appears from his way of expressing himself, he intended should be very magnificent: The prophet Nathan was so pleased with it, that he concluded God would be pleased with it too; and "said to the king, go and do all that is in thine heart: for the Lord is with thee." 2 Sam. vii. 3. He was in the right to think that God would be pleased with the thing: But it seems the time for it was not yet come: And, therefore, Nathan is sent the next day, with a message from God, forbidding it; but, at the same time, with a very gracious promise to David, the chief part whereof we have from verse 12 to verse 16, in these words: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: If he commit iniquity I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the

connected the external preservation of the family of David, and his kingdom, with their eternal salvation; as the coming of the Messiah depended upon it.

2. God promised to make his kingdom of Large Extent, as well as of long duration: "I will set his hand in the sea; and his right hand in the river." These words refer unto the Messiah, at first instance; but they contain also an allusion unto the worldly kingdom: For, as the sacred historian remarks, in it the prediction was

stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." Here are plainly some things that relate to Solomon; and some things of a higher nature, relating to a throne and a kingdom that should be established FOR EVER.—The repetition of this last particular is very observable: "I will establish the throne of his kingdom FOR EVER." Again, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established FOR EVER before thee: thy throne shall be established FOR EVER."—It was this that struck king David, as may be seen from the prayer he offers upon this occasion: For, as soon as Nathan had delivered his message, verse 17. "According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David." We are told immediately, verse 18. "Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" Verse 19. "And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come: AND IS THIS THE MANNER OF MAN, O LORD GOD?"—It is this last

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was also verified: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt*." The kingdom of the Messiah is far more extensive, however, than that of Solomon: "All nations, people, and languages, shall serve him†." The spiritual monarchy of Jesus Christ is the only universal monarchy that ever was, or will be in the world.

3. God promised to set his Kingdom secure from enemies. The first part of David's reign was

* 1 Kings iv. 21. † Dan. vii. 14.

last clause I must dwell upon a little, "Is this the manner of man?" &c. There is no interrogation in the Hebrew, but a direct assertion; *ve-zoth torath ha-Adam, Adonai Jehovah*—literally, *et ista lex Adami, Domine Jehovah: This is the law of the Adam; or the Man, (for the ׀ is demonstrative and emphatical) O Lord Jehovah.*—David could not but observe, from the whole turn of the message, that it was prophetic. It related to his seed after him, that should proceed out of his bowels, whose kingdom should be established: "He shall build an house for my name," (says God) this Solomon did, "and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." Not in Solomon's hand surely; this could never be the meaning—nor could David apprehend it so.—In the next verse, Solomon's defection is foretold; but with a gracious promise, however, that God's mercy should not depart from him, as "he took it from Saul:" but that the kingdom should be still continued to his posterity.—And, lastly, It was foretold in the strongest terms, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."—If the Jews, either of former or of

was troublesome and hazardous: Hence God deemed it an unsuitable time for building his temple: But this promise insured a blessed tranquility to his Seed: "I will appoint a place for my people Israel, I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more: neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as before time *." This respects the subjects of David and Solomon literally; but the subjects of the Prince of Peace must by no means be excluded. The promise of safety to them, through him, is conceived in similar terms: "The enemy shall not exact on him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face; and plague them that hate him."—"I will clothe his enemies with shame, as with a garment †." The son of wickedness

later times, have interpreted this of a temporal kingdom; or such as was intended for their nation only, to raise them to the height of glory: They have not only gone contrary to fact, but to the voices of their own prophets; who speak of the kingdom of the Messiah as everlasting, and universal; and, therefore (to be sure), a spiritual one. "There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," says Daniel of the "SON OF MAN," Chap. vii. 14.—an appellation (by the way) not very different from that of Adam, or THE MAN." PETERS'S Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job, Preface, p. 67, 68, 69.

* 2 Sam. vii. 10. † Psal. lxxxix. 22, 23. and Psal. cxxxii. 18.

exactcd

exacted on the first Adam, and afflicted his Seed; but he was beat down, and got his head bruised, when he entered the lists with the second Adam: And the effect of victory, where it is so complete as that of the Seed of the woman, is peace. The latter end of David's reign was much more quiet than the beginning of it. Solomon was favoured with still more tranquility. But what was it all to the glorious rest of our Emmanuel? Said God to David, "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of REST; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be SOLOMON; and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days*." But how transitory and vain was this rest compared with that which the Gentiles shall seek? For unto him shall the Gentiles seek, and HIS REST shall be glorious.

4. God promised Sonship unto the Seed of David: "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son†." This promise (to use the words of Dr Owen) belonged first unto Solomon, denoting that fatherly love, care, and protection that God would afford him in his kingdom, so far as Christ was represented by him therein; which requires not that they (the words of the promise) absolutely, and in all just consequences from them, belong unto the person of So-

* 1 Chron. xxii. 9. † 2 Sam. vii 14.

lomon : PRINCIPALLY, therefore, they intended Christ himself; expressing that eternal and unchangeable love which the Father bore unto him, grounded on the relation of FATHER and SON. The same author adds, "If it be asked on what account God would thus be a Father unto Jesus Christ, in this peculiar manner? It must be answered, That the radical, fundamental cause of it lay in the relation that was between them from his eternal generation: But he manifested himself to be his Father, and engaged to deal with him in the love and care of a Father, as he had accomplished the work of mediation on earth, and was exalted to his throne and rule in heaven *."

5. God promised to keep his Mercy for the Seed of David, and the subjects of the Messiah, even although they should deserve chastisement by the commission of iniquity: "If he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men; and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul; whom I put away before thee †." Though the extraordinary Seed of David could not commit iniquity in his own person; yet, the members of his myſtical body could: Hence,

* Dr Owen on Heb. i. 5. Vide Vol. I. p. 84, 85.

† 2. Sam. vii. 14, 15.

the Psalmist explains it of the children of this Prince *: And all the members of his mystical body in this world, are not only liable to, but actually guilty of committing INIQUITY †. But, upon supposition of such transgression, which was absolutely certain, as foreseen by God, two things are secured by this promise: First, That this iniquity must be CORRECTED. Though the terms CHASTEN and VISIT sometimes import penal affliction; yet, in their present connection, they denote that which is salutary and medicinal: Nor is this sense infrequent in the Old Testament ‡: But, although the terms should only mean punishment in general; yet their present connection forbids us to understand them of that which is penal and vindictive. The rod, with which he will correct is the rod of men: The stripes with which he will visit, those of the children of men: That is, such as a man will use for the correction of his children. Now, love is the spring of genuine paternal correction. Secondly, God engageth to continue his mercy, notwithstanding this correction: "Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him; nor suffer my faithfulness to fail §:" Even his spe-

* Psal. lxxxix. 30—33.

† The nature and extent of their sin is known by the law which it violates; even the ceremonial, judicial, and moral, denoted by JUDGMENTS, STATUTES, and COMMANDMENTS.

‡ If. ii. 4. Prov. iii. 11, 12. See also Psal. xvii. 3.

§ 2 Sam. vii. 15. Psal. lxxxix. 33.

cial and distinguishing mercies, so much celebrated in the beginning of the psalm: Such as flow in the channel of the new covenant. Common gifts and favours, such as prophecy, have been taken away, as in the case of Saul: But covenanted mercies cannot depart;—they are the sure mercies of David.

6. God promised that David's Seed should build a House unto the name of the Lord: "He shall BUILD A HOUSE for my name *." This house is certainly the temple, on which David's heart was so greatly set; and the promise met with an accomplishment in Solomon, as to the literal import of it: But the temple was a type of various import,—denoting the human nature of Christ, his mystical body; as also the Church, in which it dwells, whether in her militant or triumphant state.

III. IT must now be enquired, When were these promises made to David? It is not improbable that there were some hints revealed by Samuel; but as it was improper to be explicit as long as Saul was in power, and as it is God's usual way to cause the light of revelation to advance; so the clearer editions of them were reserved for the ministry of Nathan, and the inspiration bestowed on the royal prophet in his own person.

* 2 Sam. vii. 13.

1. THE promises were intimated to David by the ministry of Nathan. It is to this revelation of them we have chiefly attended, which was bestowed for his satisfaction, as to building the temple; and it was every way adequate to the purpose. Accordingly, it produced a gratulatory prayer at that time, which merits particular consideration. There is one thing in particular, even the source of all these exceeding great and precious promises, upon which he dilates; and on which we shall dwell a little at this time. "Then went king David in before the Lord; and he said, What am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house, for a great while to come: and is this the manner of man, O Lord God." The last sentence I would choose to render, "This is the law of that Adam (who is) the Lord Jehovah*." The scope of the place is, as if the royal prophet

* 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19.

There are few places in which our translators shoot wider of the mark than in this text. They give this last sentence the form of an interrogation; but there is not the smallest vestige of an interrogation in all the verse. But this is not all, our translators seem to have mistaken the meaning and connection of the terms, as well as the nature of the sentence. תורה, which our translators render MANNER, denotes a DISPOSITION, or constitution; LAW, or SETTLEMENT: and it expresseth the will of the Father in the eternal covenant, Psal. xl. 8. "Thy LAW is within my heart." The appointment of Jesus Christ

prophet had said, "It was not mine own merit, or that of mine ancestors, which moved thee to spare us hitherto: What are both in thy sight? But preservation in common Providence, safety amidst a thousand dangers is nothing, compared with that perpetuity which is secured to my Seed, in the enjoyment of a kingdom! Even the kingdom of the Messiah, which can never be destroyed. Whence is all this favour to my family; when others, equally

to be a surety for sinners, had in it the nature of a law, in respect of the immutable nature of it;—in respect of its obligation on the conscience of his human nature. This term seems to be of a like import with **חַוָּה**, used in the parallel text, 1 Chron xvii. 17. where it ought to be rendered DISPOSITION, or COVENANT.—The term **חַוָּה** is a proper name in 2 Sam. vii. 19. as well as in 1 Chron. xvii. 17. and should be rendered THAT ADAM; so it was by the Vulgate; and also by Pagnin and in the Tigurine version. Nor can it be reasonably objected, that this view is inconsistent with the use of **ה** emphatic; for, though proper names do not ordinarily admit of it, yet, when any illustrious person is mentioned, his name receives this prefix, to point him out as it were with the finger, Numb. xiii. 22, and 28. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Aben-Ezra concludes, that some mystery is intended when this form of speech is used; and no one thing can be more mysterious than the object of David's admiration: It is even THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH: For Ha-Adam is of the same case with Adonai Jehovah. The meaning is, This illustrious Adam is the Lord Jehovah; or, as Paul expresseth it, "THE SECOND MAN, THE LORD FROM HEAVEN." The terms are so connected by the accentuation, in the inspired original, that they cannot be applied unto any, but one and the same person. In this manner
was

ly worthy, sink down into oblivion? This kindness can proceed from no other source than THAT LAW by which the Lord Jehovah was constituted the Second Adam. Nor would my family be worthy of preservation for a great while to come, didst not thou intend to raise the Second Adam from it in the fulness of time. I acknowledge I could never account for such promises as thou hast made, but on the plan of sovereign grace, manifested in the Council

was the text rendered and explained by Luther, Tom. VIII. Jen. German, p. 145. Fessel. Adversar. Lib. VI. cap. iv. Calov. Bibl. Illustrat. p. 768. Walther. Harmon. Bibl. p. 384, 385, 386.——The parallel text leads also unto this view of the term, 1 Chron. xvii. 17. The term is in the same form as in 2 Sam. vii. 19. And there is also a distinguishing property ascribed to him, by which he may be known, האדם המעלה: Our translation has it, “And has regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.” But the phrase cannot be so rendered; as this sense of it is not justified by Scripture use. As Peters, the author above quoted, observes, *ma-pelah* denotes either FUTURE OR ABOVE: As an adverb, it signifies SUPRA, and that both with respect to time and place, viz. FORWARD, or future, with respect to time; so 1 Sam. xvi. 13. “From that day forward;” i. e. from that day, and for the future, 1 Sam. xxx. 25. Taken in this sense, the phrase is, THE FUTURE ADAM, and is parallel unto Rom. v. 14. “Who is the figure of him that was to come.” Taken in the other sense, it will be found parallel to 1 Cor. xv. 47. “THE SECOND MAN IS THE LORD FROM HEAVEN.” Peters, however, seems to be mistaken in rendering *Adonai Jehovah* in the vocative case, while it ought, PER APPPOSITIONEM, to be taken in connection with the foregoing *Ha-Adam*, announcing the Seed of David, the true Messiah, to be Adam, even the hea-

Council of Peace : This constitution, however, affords good reason for them all. When I fix my soul upon it, I am utterly swallowed up ! The idea is far too august to be uttered ! My most exalted conceptions sink infinitely below their glorious object ! The splendour of it imposeth on me an emphatic silence ! What can David say more ? For the sake of thine eter-

venly Adam, in contradistinction from the first man, who is of the earth, earthy ; and, at the same time, the Lord Jehovah. This view of the text may also be evidenced from the connection, particularly the following context in both places. David expressly renounced every degree of merit as to the procuring of these great blessings promised him : Neither himself nor family had even the smallest claim on God. Yet he speaks of a SERVANT for whose sake these promises had been made. In 1 Chron. xvii. 19. it is, "For thy SERVANT's sake, and according to thine own heart hast thou done all this greatness." In 2 Sam. vii. 21. "For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things." Who is this, who is at once the SERVANT OF GOD, and the WORD OF GOD ? Who but he, who, being in the form of God, took on him the form of a servant ? Who is this servant but the Word, who was made flesh ? The books of Chronicles have not been searched as they ought, either by private Christians or commentators ; yet they have not been wholly neglected : And such commentators as have explained them with the greatest care, have given the same sense of the passages considered, with that I have endeavoured to establish. Vide Lavater in Loc. Witf. Exercit. de sermon. Dei, "Quidni hæc duo (scil. 2 Sam. vii. 21. and 1 Chron. xvii. 19.) ita conferamus, ut qui in Chronicorum Libris SERVUS Dei appellatur, idem in iis qui Samuelis dicuntur VERBUM DEI nominetur ? Servus autem Dei *מִשְׁכָּן* Messias est Is. xlii. 1. chap. xlix. 5."

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nal word, and according to thine own heart, haſt thou done all theſe great things.

2. **THE** promiſes of this covenant were made once, if not oftener, to David himſelf, by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt. This is evident from his uſing the prophetic ſtyle. But the word of the Lord came unto me ſaying, &c.

IV. How was this covenant confirmed?

1. **BY** the reiteration of the promiſes of it. Every renovation of the promiſes were a ratification of the foregoing ones. The repetition of them to himſelf was a ſolemn confirmation of what had been announced to Nathan.

2. **BY** the oath of God, as is often declared. The divine example is worthy both of his and our imitation.

3. **THEY** were ratified by a partial accompliſhment of them to David and his ſeed, which was a pledge of the full accompliſhment of them in due time *.

FOURTHLY,

* From this ſubject we may learn,——1. The abſurdity of imagining there can be nothing ſpiritual in covenants really typical. The greater part of the Gläſite reasoning againſt the duty of Covenanting in the times of the New Teſtament, proceed upon this principle. Say they,

them, as the foundation of their access to God in this duty. There were no new promises made to them at this time; but only a repetition of the Davidic ones, with such others as suited their peculiar circumstances: "And he said unto me, Solomon, thy son, he shall build my house, and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my Son, and I will be his father. Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever. —Now, therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation, and in the audience of our God," &c. Now, THEREFORE; that is, because of all these promises, ye are bound, by ties of gratitude, to keep all God's commandments.

FIFTHLY, I shall next consider the MINISTRY OF DAVID in this Transaction; and it was a prophetic administration. It is not to be doubted but David gave some proofs of royalty on this occasion: For the congregation was assembled for the purpose of settling the succession to the crown, as well as for entering into a religious covenant with God. But even in this declaration, respecting the kingdom, he acted the prophet rather than the prince;—unveiling the purpose of heaven in setting all his sons aside from the throne, except Solomon: "GOD SAID unto me, Thou shalt not build me an house," &c. "And he SAID UNTO ME, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house,"

house *," &c. In all which David published not his own edict ; but that of him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

SIXTHLY, I shall now attend unto the MATTER of this Covenant. It is concisely delivered by the sacred historian, in the following terms: " Now, therefore, in sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord ; and in the audience of our God,—keep, and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever †." Observe the duties unto which they were engaged ; and the motive unto obedience.

1. THE Duties unto which David took this Congregation engaged ; which are, To keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord.—They must KEEP all the commandments of the Lord, as their God in covenant ; that is, all the commandments which the Lord God of Israel had given them, whether morals, ceremonials, or judicials. The duty of keeping them is expressed by a term which is frequently used to denote God's faithfulness in performing his promises ‡,—teaching Israel to imitate God in this respect ; as he keepeth his

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 3, 6. † 1 Chron. xxviii. 8.

‡ Deut. vii. 9, 12. 1 Kings viii. 23. 2 Chron. vi. 14. &c.

covenant ever in remembrance, so we should never forget his precepts. We should preserve this sacred depositum, with heart and hand, all the days of our life.—It beloveth them to SEEK for all the commandments of the Lord. They must apply their minds to search into the will of God: They must search into it with care and conscience; their desires being set upon the sacred system all the days of their life. This duty was peculiarly fit at this time, as Israel was sunk into great indifference and ignorance, during the reign of Saul on the one hand; and as David, and other prophets, had added various books unto the volume of inspiration, on the other. He had also given various directions, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost, respecting the worship of God in his temple, as well as the duty of building it. These additions to the sacred canon deserved the most diligent scrutiny, and the closest attention from the whole congregation. The truth is, it is a standing duty to search the scriptures still, as enjoined in both Testaments: Said Christ, “Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life*.” Said God, by Isaiah, “Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read†,” &c.

2. THIS covenant contains motives unto obedience.—“That ye may possess this good

* John v. 39. † Is. xxxiv. 16.

land *." That is, that ye may continue to possess that land which your ancestors have possessed more than four hundred years. The possession of this land was necessary unto the celebration of God's worship; as several parts of it could not be observed, as it was commanded, any where else. The privileges enjoyed in this land also exhibited, as in a figure, those immunities which are reserved for the heirs of salvation in the better country.

—Another motive unto the duties specified is, "That ye may leave this good land for an inheritance unto your children after you for ever †." This motive was included among the promises of the Sinai Covenant: And, as regard to posterity is one of the strongest affections that God has implanted into the human heart, under the divine blessing, it could not fail of commanding influence on the conduct ‡.

SEVENTHLY, The next thing in order is, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant. As the space of time between this and the foregoing

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 8. † 1 Chron. xxviii. 8.

‡ Hence the poet excludes Eunuchs from the number of the merciful:

Adde quod Eunuchus nulla pietate movetur
Nec generi natis que cavet, clementia cunctis
In similes, animos que ligant consotia damni.

CLAUDIAN.

transaction was long; so the incidents are numerous. We shall select only a few: The space of time between them is not less than four hundred years*; and yet the history of the church, for that period, is dispatched in a very few chapters, where we must not expect an account of every thing that befel her. We may observe,

1. THAT shortly after the death of Joshua, and the elders who outlived him, having been his cotemporaries, the Church was plunged into very great corruption: For which many reasons may be assigned; such as, the young generation's forgetfulness of the good old paths in which Caleb and Joshua, and the rest of the godly walked; mixing with, and learning of the heathen their way, instead of covenanting with the Most High, in gratitude for, and abuse of mercy received; idolatry, unbridled licentiousness, and emulation among the tribes themselves, the native effect of covenant-violation with God.

2. As a correction of their error, and chastisement for their crimes, God delivered them over to the fury of their enemies: And they tyrannized over them with unmixed and almost unexampled cruelty. They travelled over a tract of sin and punishment; of repentance,

* Vide Spanheim, Chron. p. 234.

deliverance,

deliverance, and relapse after repentance, almost as often as God raised up a deliverer for them. The capital crime of which they were convicted is, Covenant-violation: "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and he said, because this people hath transgressed my covenant, which I commanded their fathers*," &c. Covenant-violation was a sin as little thought of in that age as in this, perhaps; but it implied every other sin, as the covenant extended to the whole and every part of the law. It was a covenant extending from father to son; though it was enjoined their fathers, yet they were as guilty of covenant-violation as if they had covenanted in their own persons, when they transgressed it.

3. FROM time to time God had raised up deliverers unto them, who were so many forerunners of the Redeemer of souls. The design of the book of Judges, and the first book of Samuel, is, to give us an exalted idea of divine sovereignty in this respect. The deliverance was more or less remarkable, both in point of degree and duration, as the deliverer kept God's way. Accordingly, some of them were honoured to advance, at once, the interests of religion and the commonwealth: Some of them, such as Gideon's family, began well, but ended ill.

* Judges ii. 20.

4. IT was reserved for David to complete the conquest of Canaan; and to cause Israel make various advances in reformation, superior to those which obtained in the days of the Judges. The greater part of the Judges appear to have been good men, as well as great generals; but still there were many palpable defects in the public state of religion under some of the best of them. The ark had been removed from Shiloh to the field of battle, just before the death of Eli. It was taken by the Philistines; and, although they sent it back into the land of Israel, it does not appear that ever it was replaced all the days of Samuel and Saul. Thus the worship of the tabernacle was deranged, being deprived of its centre: but David had not only prepared a place for the ark; but also brought it up to the place which he had fitted up for it. He had also settled the service of the Priests, Levites, Porters, and Singers, in certain courses; which continued, in some measure, until the days of the Messiah. The most essential service, however, which he did unto the Church was, his writing the greater part of the book of Psalms; and appointing them to be used both in the public and private praises of the Church of God, which practice has been continued even unto this time. Much about the same time, to the five books of Moses were added both the books of Samuel, and that of Ruth; as the book of Judges had been, probably, some short time

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time before. Now, as these pieces of reformation had been attained under the ministry of David, as a prophet; and under his auspices, as a king; so it was proper for the congregation of Israel to seek them out; and, having found them, TO KEEP them continually, as was expressed in the article of the covenant.

5. DAVID and the congregation of Israel were about to dedicate part of their substance unto the Lord. Now, it was fit, that the dedication of their persons should precede that of their substance. It did so in the Macedonian church: "Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality: For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us with much intreaty, that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord*." David made a very liberal dedication of his substance at this time: He gave, for the house of his God, the prodigious sum of three thousand talents of gold, and seven thousand talents of silver, of his own private property. The congregation followed the royal example. But that which added most beauty unto this dedication was, the willing mind and the grateful heart of the

* 2 Cor. viii. 2—5.

offerers. David speaks of it in the style of admiration; "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee; and of thine own have we given thee."—"O Lord, our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name, cometh of thine own hand, and is all thine own *."

6. DAVID was near his latter end: And covenant-renovation was highly necessary for preserving that reformation which God had accomplished in his days;—for encouraging the young generation in the discharge of their duty. David foresaw the importance of that work which God had carved out for survivors; wherefore, like Moses and Joshua, he used covenanting when near his latter end, as a means of making them strengthen one another's hands, and encourage one another's heart in the execution of it †.

EIGHTHLY, The next thing is, The CONFIRMATIONS of this Covenant. There are two solemnities for this purpose, marked in the sacred text,

* 1 Chron. xxix. 14. 16.

† A variety of other Occasions might have been specified; but, rather than swell the work, I beg leave to refer the reader to Spanheim, F. F. Hist. V. T. p. 346, and 359. Leid. de Repub. Lib. VII. cap. vii.

1. DAVID

DAVID took the whole congregation with-
 inst every individual in it, in case of
 “ Now, therefore, in the sight of all
 congregation of the Lord *.” The
 nation would rise up against the
 king to dare to violate such an en-
 dorsement of the preceding Covenant.

The Covenant was confirmed with the
 use of an oath. It was administered not
 only in the sight of all Israel; but also, “ in
 the audience of our God †.” In the former
 Covenant, the stones which Joshua set up are
 said to hear: In this one, the Lord is said to
 hear. The original phrase is, “ IN THE EARS
 OF OUR GOD.” Both the administration and
 acceptance of this Covenant were in the
 ears of the Lord. When ears are ascribed to
 God, they denote his omniscience. This man-
 ner of expression imports a solemn appeal to
 God, as the omniscient witness and omnipotent
 judge of his people.

LASTLY, I shall close this Dissertation with
 an INFERENCE or two.

I. WE may see, that God usually makes
 use of one instrument for the commencement,
 and another for the consummation and per-
 fecting of his work. Moses began Israel's jour-
 ney to Canaan; Joshua finished it. David pre-

* 1 Chron. xxviii. 8. † Ibid.

pared for the temple building and service ; Solomon had the honour of completing both. Luther began the Reformation ; Calvin was honoured to bring it to greater perfection, and nearer conformity to the pattern shewed in the holy Scriptures.

2. A PUBLIC SPIRIT for the advancement of religion is perfectly consistent with true Patriotism. David was not only a good king, and great patriot ; but also an eminent prophet, and a great saint. These lineaments of his character disposed him to prefer the settlement of the Church to that of the succession of the Crown ; the building of the temple to the building of the palace : In a word, the things of God to those of his kingdom and family. But he was by no means a-wanting as to his concern for the interest of both his subjects and children. He intended to bring their civil concerns into subordination to their religious concerns : To advance them in that subordination, not otherways : And it is only in this channel that we can expect civil concerns to prosper. Matters will never be right with us till the members of the Church be endued with his spirit.

3. SOLEMN COVENANTING is a suitable preparation for important services. Personal Covenanting should precede the entrance on personal service. Public Covenanting preceded the dedication of substance for temple building, as well as the work of temple building itself.

DISSE-

DISSERTATION IX.

ON THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND JUDAH, IN THE REIGN OF ASA.

2 CHRON. XV. 12—14.

HERE I shall attend—I. Unto the Parties Covenanting.—II. The Matter of the Covenant.—III. The Manner of Covenanting. IV. The Punishment of Idolaters.—V. The Occasions of this Transaction.—VI. The Confirmations of it.—Deducing some Inferences from the whole.

FIRST, I must attend unto the PARTIES Covenanting.

I. THE Party unto whom they engaged is, “The Lord God of their Fathers.” As their fathers covenanted for their seed, as well as for themselves; so these covenanters looked back unto that covenant-relation in which God

THIRDLY, The MANNER in which they covenanted is the next branch of our subject.

I. THEY did it WITH ALL THE HEART. That is, they did it in sincerity, in opposition to feigned professions of faith and obedience. Their duty corresponded with the divine rule; for it required them to love God with all their heart and with all their soul; the former denoting the understanding, that governing faculty; and the latter the will*. The law extended to all the people, and to all of the man; to each faculty and power of the soul, and to every member of the body. Hence we may conclude, that this was not a state covenant in the commonwealth: For matters of state can only affect the outward man. It is

* Some learned men explain the terms HEART and SOUL otherways. Mr Romaine, for example (Sermons on Mark xii. 28—31), understands the first of the affections; but it is taken for the understanding, Job ix. 4. Psal. xcv. 10. II. vi. 10. STOCKIUS: And, when placed before soul, it is most natural to explain the former of the intellectual powers; see Ainsworth on Deut. vi. 5. Dr Pocock on Hosea, p. 307. Mr Romaine also insinuates, that “the term rendered soul never denotes the immaterial and immortal spirit; but is constantly used for the parts concerned in carrying on the circulation of the blood, and in which the appetites of the human frame are placed.” But though it be granted, that the word is sometimes taken in an inferior sense; yet it must also denote the immortal spirit, Gen. xxxv. 18. And when placed in such a connection as in this text, it denotes the will and affections, Gen. xxii. 3. 1 Kings xix. 3.

incompetent

incompetent for statesmen to penetrate into the heart.

2. **THEY** rejoiced at the oath of God: "They swear unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets *." These instruments were used in the duty of praise, which preceded, or followed the solemn action. This is much more natural than to suppose, that the sacred bond was announced with the sound of trumpet. Times of covenanting have ever been seasons of gladness and rejoicing; so far is it from being true, that this solemn service is dull and insipid: But this demonstration of joy was adapted to the dispensation under which they covenanted with God. It would be fallacious to a degree, however, to conclude in favour of instrumental music in divine worship,

* The instruments of praise, under the typical dispensation, were many. The learned Mr Foord enumerates no fewer than sixteen different kinds (*Præf. ad Exposit. p. 2.*); but others reckon they were not so many. Schindler mentions only seven. Probably the same instruments had different names: If so, Schindler's calculation will be found most correct. But the truth is, as the whole of the instrumental music which was used in the worship of God seems to have been confined to the tabernacle and temple, and to have perished with the latter; so that we can, with certainty, determine little or nothing concerning it. No one thing can be more imaginary than the attempts of the Popish Churches to revive this part of the Jewish ceremonies, when in absolute uncertainty as to the nature of it; and especially after the solemn burial of them all in the destruction of Jerusalem.

on the one hand ; or to conclude against Covenanting, as a ceremonial duty, because of this circumstance attending it, on the other.

FOURTHLY, The PUNISHMENT of such as would not seek the Lord God of their fathers deserves to be considered in the next place : “ That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman*.” This punishment was first denounced when God gave the judicial law to Moses; and Aza applied it to the particular case of the kingdom in his day. The only question to which I shall attend is, If this law were peculiar to the Jews, or common to all men? In answer to which I shall observe,

I. THAT Idolatry, respecting the object of worship, is a crime punishable by the law of nature, being a manifest violation of it. But, to set the matter in a clearer point of view, The law of nature must be considered as operating in a state of nature ; or, as in a state of civil society. Idolatry in a state of nature, is a crime against the law of nature ; but, in that state, one man is to another as one independent nation is to another ; no man having right to hurt another, except in the case of self-defence ; or in the prevention and repara-

* 2 Chron. xv. 13.

tion of injuries. The right of executing the law of nature, in this state, cannot be exerted in the restraint of crimes which are, by remote consequences only, hurtful to society. Idolatry, therefore, though a crime against the law of nature, prior to the erection of society, must be left to the judgment of God ; seeing there is no human jurisdiction empowered to restrain it. But, in a state of civil society, it is quite otherways. The civil law is super-induced, and comes in aid of the law of nature : And the execution of that law is intrusted to the civil magistrate. Therefore, where the magistrate knows the true God, and where his subjects have known him likewise, he is bound to punish such idolaters as set up false gods within his jurisdiction ; nor can he protect the public safety if he does otherways : For the acknowledgment of God is essentially necessary unto the being of society, that oaths, which are appeals to his omniscience and omnipotence may be of force. Oaths are the ligaments of society ; but if that being, by whom we swear, be superseded, and vanities substituted in his room, these ligaments are dissolved, and, by consequence, society itself *.

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* The doctrines of toleration and restraint, in matters of religion, ought to be touched with a delicate hand, I grant ; but, I hope, I have not exceeded in what is delivered. Dr Owen, who was never suspected of intolerant principles, carries the matter much higher : " It

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2. THE magistrates of the Jewish republic were bound to punish idolaters on a two-fold account: They were bound to do it on the principles just mentioned; and for reasons peculiar to their theocratical government. God was King of the Jews, or head of the theocracy; therefore, he could not suffer any other deity, more than any earthly king could admit a rival into his kingdom. Two heads of the same kind and order in any commonwealth are absolutely incompatible. Hence idolatry had a particular aggravation in Canaan, beyond what it has in any other country; it amounted to nothing less than high treason: Now, treason has been deemed capital in every age. Hence, we may see, how unjustly the Mosaic system in general, and this covenant in particular, have been charged with cruelty by the Deists and libertines of these times. They grant, that treason has ever been considered as a capital crime among mankind; and they dare not deny, but the traitor justly pays his head, when in the power of majesty: But here they tax the execution of traitors with the most flagrant injustice! Shocking absurdity! Gross infatuation!

is the duty of magistrates," said he, "not to allow any public places for false and abominable worship; as also, to demolish all outward appearances of such superstitious, idolatrous, and unacceptable service. Let Papists, who are idolaters; and Socinians, who are anthropolatres, plead for themselves." See Dr OWEN on Toleration, and Dr LOWRY's Letter to Dr Warburton.

FIFTHLY,

FIFTHLY, We may now consider the **OCCASIONS** of this Covenant. The interval between this transaction and that in last year of David's reign was near seventy-six years: For the kings which were between David and Aſa reigned juſt ſixty years; and this covenant took place in the fifteenth year of Aſa's reign. More particularly,

1. **THIS** covenant obtained after God had accomplished various promiſes made to Iſrael in the Davidic Covenant. He had ſet Solomon on the throne of his father David, bleſſed Iſrael with remarkable peace and proſperity under his government; enabled him to build a moſt ſplendid houſe for the name of the Lord*; and brought every part of the ceremonial worſhip unto the higheſt pitch of perfection and glory. Now, the accompliſhment of God's promiſes laid them under new obligations to devote themſelves to him who beſtowed all things ſo liberally on them: And it was proper to teſtify their gratitude for the advancement of his work among them, by vowing to him who had brought them hitherto.

2. **THE** glory of the kingdom, and eſpecially the ſplendor of religion, had been greatly eclipsed by Solomon's apoſtacy. That ſame

* For a delineation of this fabric, and a view of the **MYSTERIES** veiled under it, ſee Lee on Solomon's Temple, as alſo Arias Montan. Villalpand. and Lewis Cappellus on the ſubject.

Solomon who had been so much the object of divine love, unto whom God had appeared twice, even he fell into the horrid sin of idolatry; and that in an advanced period of life. Fondness for imitating the fashions of the great, in matters of religion as well as common life, has been the plague of both ancient and modern times; therefore, it is not improbable, that, in compliance with their prince, his courtiers relinquished the true religion and a good conscience along with him. Solomon himself was probably reclaimed, however, and wrote the book of Ecclesiastes after his reformation.

3. THE apostacy of Solomon had been signally punished in the revolt of the ten tribes from under the authority of the family of David, which was followed with remarkable apostacy from the true religion, and dreadful covenant-violation. Jeroboam, for political reasons, prohibited the males from appearing three times a-year before the Lord at Jerusalem, as was required by the law of Moses. To accommodate them in his own dominions, he set up one calf at Bethel, the south end of his kingdom, on the borders of that of Judah, to prevent the Israelites from going into it: Another at Dan, that he might at once accommodate the northern territories, and also draw persons hither from the southern parts. These reasons were too gross, however, to be either assigned or avowed: The ostensible one was, their personal ease; "It is too much for you to

to go up to Jerusalem." This idolatry greatly resembled that of the golden calf; and the monarch's speech seems to have been copied from Aaron's on that occasion. Corruption had made alarming progress under the auspices of the kings of Israel, which loudly called for an explicit testimony against it, as well as the present application of a proper remedy.

4. THE Lord, in sovereign grace, had reserved a remnant for himself, notwithstanding these shaking providences, and heinous provocations. The sacred historian remarks various things which obtained, in favour of religion, under the reign of Aza. He took away the altars, brake down the high places and images, and cut down the groves. The Lord had also given several victories to the children of Judah; and sent various encouraging messages by his prophets unto them: "And when Aza heard these words, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of the land of Benjamin, and of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim; and renewed the altar of the Lord that was before the porch of the Lord." Now, as this reformation was genuine in its principle,—large in its extent, it was proper to make it a covenanted-reformation, that it might be lasting in its duration.

SIXTHLY, The SOLEMNITIES by which this Covenant was ratified, may be considered in the next place.

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1. IT was confirmed by OATH *. The form of the oath is not registered in the inspired volume; nor can the particular mode of swearing be learned from it: but as to the certainty of the fact we have no reason to hesitate.

2. IT was probably ratified by sacrifice and writing. The sacred historian assures, that they offered sacrifices at the same time. Now, although some of them might be offered before the solemn action, as a preparative for it; yet, it is probable, there were others offered besides them. It is also reasonable to conclude, that as they covenanted under the influence of the Holy Ghost, he would induce them to use every solemnity which had been left on record for their imitation.

I SHALL now close this dissertation with an INFERENCE or two for improvement of what has been said.

1. WE may see the imperfection of grace, even in the wisest and best of God's children, in this world. Solomon, the wisest of men, yielded to a trifling temptation; so as to deface that system which had arrived at its meridian splendor under his auspices. Excellence of gifts, abundance of manifestation, are no barrier against a partial apostacy: Solomon had

both;—we read of his fall, but not of his repentance. Good king Afa, in the fifteenth year of his reign, was also a distinguished covenanter; in the last years of his reign, when he was censured by Hanani the Seer, “he was wroth with the Seer, and put him in the prison-house.” This rebellion against just censure, contumacy against the authority of the Seer, and putting him in prison, did not destroy the work of God in his soul, nor disannul his title to the heavenly inheritance: For the Spirit of God witnesseth, notwithstanding these things, “his heart was perfect with the Lord all his days.”

2. COVENANTING ought to be essayed and practised by the smaller number of professors of religion, even when the greater part continue in apostacy, and refuse to be reclaimed. The ten tribes were the greater, and apostatizing church: The two tribes the lesser, and reforming one. Notwithstanding the majority was on the side of defection; yet the minor part did not lose their right unto their covenanted God, neither were their obligations to him dissolved. It has been said by some, Covenanting is inexpedient in the present time, as the greater part of Christians are otherways minded. But, if the objection be valid now, why was it not so then? They might have said, when the spirit of God excited them to this duty, “The majority of professors are against it, pray, therefore, have us excused.” Might
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not the prophet easily rejoin, "The authority of God, interposed in his precept, is sufficient warrant for present duty, though all the world be against it." Should any still insist, that "If the majority avow their religion with the solemnity of an oath, and the minority the *irs*, then the land will be profaned with contradictory swearing." The answer is easy, The profanity lies at the door of them who swear unto a false religion; and the professors of the true religion are by no means answerable for the opposers of it. Moreover, few who have imbibed false principles, and followed corrupt practices, ever durst avow them with the solemnity of an oath. Sin and error delight to walk in the shade.

DISSERTATION X.

ON THE

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND JUDAH, IN THE DAYS OF JEHOIADA.

2 KINGS xi. 17. 2 CHRON. xxiii 16.

AS this transaction took place at a very remarkable revolution of the State, it may not be improper to attend,—I. Unto the Character and Circumstances of the Covenanters. —II. The Minister who bore a principal share in that revolution, and who dispensed this Covenant.—III. Consider the Substance of the Covenant,—IV. The Occasions of it.—And then conclude with some Reflections on the whole.

FIRST, I must attend unto the CHARACTER and CIRCUMSTANCES of the Covenanters. The sketch which is drawn of them by the inspired historian is shorter than usual: Our survey must be contracted in proportion. They

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were Jehoiada,—all the people,—and the King.

1. JEHOIADA whose character is afterwards reviewed, as the Minister in this transaction: “And Jehoiada made a covenant between HIM, and between all the people*,” &c. Some refer the relative him, as referring to the remote antecedent Jehovah, or Lord, mentioned in verse fourteenth; and they include the intermediate verses in a parenthesis†. And the sense, according to this connection is, and Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and all the people. But this connection seems, to me at least, far strained; especially as a much more natural account of things may be had, by referring the relative HIM to Jehoiada, as its immediate antecedent. Jehoiada sustained a two-fold character; that of an eminent covenanter, and that of an High-priest in the congregation. Like Moses, he was God’s representative; and also a typical mediator, through whom the people drew near to God‡.

2. ALL THE PEOPLE were covenanters at this time. The universal designation used in

* 2 Chron. xxiii. 16.

† JUNIUS and TREMELLIUS in their annotations subjoined to their translation. In the parallel place, in Kings, the sense must be according to their view of it, indeed; but then Lord is inserted, and not referred to.

‡ See DIODATI, HENRY on the text, especially PISCATOR.

the book of the Chronicles, is to be understood of the greater part of the two tribes, as distinguished from the ten, and also from the nations round about them. It is also to be understood of ALL who were fit to enter into the congregation of the Lord.—Various orders of people are enumerated in the context, especially such as held any military rank among them: They are designed RULERS OVER HUNDREDS, and CAPTAINS, and the GUARD. They are also described as persons entering in on the Sabbath.

3. THE King is also reckoned to the number of covenanters on this occasion. He bound himself to be one of the Lord's people, in opposition to wicked Athaliah, and her accomplices, who were eminently Baal's people. In his public character, he became at once the pattern and protector of the true religion, as well as an opposer of false worship. But it might be enquired, How could Joash be an intelligent covenanter when only seven years of age? It might be answered, Youth come sooner to the exercise of reason, as well as majority, in those warmer oriental climates, than in our cold ones. Irrefragable evidence might be produced from Jewish history and antiquities, to prove that civil contracts might be made by persons in that nation, at the age of twelve, by females at least; whereas our laws fix their majority at eighteen. Now, as Chri-

stians have been deemed capable of being admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper seven years before they arrive at the years of majority, and also to join in public covenanting; grant but the Jews the same privilege, and you grant unto the King a right to covenant for himself, even at the age of seven. Again, Josiah is not the only instance of early piety among the Jewish monarchs. Josiah gave equal, if not superior proofs of it, at much the same time of life.——These covenanters, I shall only add, were the successors of covenanting ancestors, both prince and people; therefore, bound to act this part both by the law of God and antecedent federal obligations.

SECONDLY, I shall now attend unto the CHARACTER of the Minister, who had a principal hand in the revolution of the State; and who dispensed this covenant to the people. It has been said, "That Jehoiada, instead of walking in the paths of peace and loyalty, subverted the established government; and, unlike his office, not only moved sedition; but also profaned the temple of the Lord, by introducing into it statesmen and military officers, who had formed a combination to assassinate the queen, and assisted in the coronation of a child in her stead. Which are more than presumptions, that he grasped at the regency for himself, and sought the aggrandizement of his own family at the expense of the common-wealth."

wealth." For answer to these things, I may observe, That Athaliah was an usurper (to use the words of Algernoon Sidney) therefore she ought not to reign; and an idolater as well as a murderer, and therefore ought not to live; yea, a most unnatural murder of her own grandchildren. Jehoiada, however, did nothing of himself; but, having the young Prince in his power, it was proper, at once to declare his lineage and secure his life, by taking an oath of the princes of Judah to concert measures for the performance of their duty, as well as assist these princes with his wife counsel and advice in the execution of them. This was consistent with the most rigid loyalty. It was loyalty itself to the constitution, as he was zealous in maintaining the honour of the laws and liberty of the commonwealth from the domination and depredation of a tyrant. Nor have usurpation and tyranny any claim to homage and obedience,—any right to be preserved. But, by the laws of the realm, every person was bound to do all in his power for putting the Davidic line on the throne: And, if that family were at any time dispossessed of it, the administration of right reverted to the people; and, by the law, the sword was put into their hands, to reinstate the lawful heir, and execute the usurper, to revenge the murders she had committed; and to put into execution the law against idolaters, which she had so wickedly violated. Her execution,

cution, of consequence, was no assassination, but in all respects just; nor were there any to execute justice but the persons who did it, the rest having caught the dreadful infection. Had Jehoiada been intent upon the aggrandizement of his family, he might have set his own son on the throne, being of the seed-royal by the mother's-side; but regard unto the covenant of David, which settled the succession on the male line, prevented him from having any such ambitious design. Nor can the charge of his aspiring at the regency be established on a better foundation: For it does not appear that ever he acted in any other capacity than that of a counsellor, and his counsels were eminently useful, both unto prince and people. He gave good proof of his ability, in this respect, advising to such measures as were blessed for the advantage of both Church and State; and both were preserved in a flourishing condition, as long as matters were managed by his direction.—I cannot easily reconcile myself, however, to the defence which has been used in his behalf: It has been said, that Jehoiada was president of the Sanhedrim, by virtue of his office as High-priest, and had very large authority in civil affairs on that account: For the Sanhedrim, over which he presided, was an ecclesiastic court, vastly remote, in its nature and ends, from the supreme council of the state. Some authors of considerable merit have denied, that any such court as the Sanhedrim e-
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ver existed, till after the Babylonish captivity; but the institution and continuance of the Sanhedrim, both civil and ecclesiastic, are as plain as those of many other things which were never disputed *. Others grant, that there was such a court as the Sanhedrim; but deny that ever any distinction existed between the civil and ecclesiastic. It had been happy for their scheme had they established it on a proper foundation, and given a solid answer to the arguments of their opponents; but, as these have not yet been done, we may expect to be excused from giving in to it. Jehoiada was president of the ecclesiastic Sanhedrim only; and if he did any thing in the supreme council of state, his actions were certainly extraordinary; but not more so than his circumstances; and such circumstances call for uncommon exertions in every age. The office of High-priest obliged Jehoiada, doubtless, to preserve the temple inviolate; nor did his arrangement of the people amount to any prostitution of it to secular purposes: For it is well known that there was a court, in this sacred edifice, allotted to the members of the congregation; and, when clean, it became them to approach God by entering into it accordingly. And the people kept their awful distance from the Holy of Holies, as is evident from the charge which was given them

* Vid. contra Synh. Conringium de Republic. Hebræor. § 22. Vorst. de Synh. Pro Synh. SELDEN. DRUSIUM LEUSDEN, CUNEUM.

on this occasion, which they readily obeyed. Upon the whole, instead of ambition and treasonable practices, sagacity, activity, and sacred zeal for the authority and vigour of the law, both in Church and State, formed the character of this High-priest.

THIRDLY, The **SUBSTANCE** of this Covenant deserves now to be considered. There were two distinct covenants executed at this time, a civil and a sacred one. 'They are diversified thus, A covenant between the Lord, and the King and people, that they should be the Lord's people: And a covenant between the King and the people: But the civil one, which obtained at the King's coronation, is the subject of discourse at this time.

THE grant which God made to this people was the same as in the days of David and Solomon, and Aza, &c. The same promises and ordinances being continued among them. By these God acknowledged them as his people: And, seeing they were dignified with this honour, they could not do less than acknowledge themselves such, to the praise of his grace. They covenanted to be **THE LORD'S PEOPLE**. This is a concise, but comprehensive view of their sacred bond; which must include every duty that the law enjoined. It bound them, in particular, unto all those duties which their peculiar circumstances pointed out unto them. What

What would God require at the hand of his people, at a time when his enemies did every thing in their power to frustrate his promise respecting the seed-royal in the family of David? What would he have them to do, at a time when the worship of Baal was celebrated with every degree of splendour and magnificence; and that of the true God suppressed? When the altar of Baal was erected in the temple of the Most High God; and that of Jehovah cast down?—When the consciences of such as worshipped the Lord God of Israel were oppressed, and their most sacred rights violated? Would he not have them to set THE SEED OF DAVID on the throne of his father,—repair the altar of the Lord,—purify his temple,—break down every monument of idolatry,—as well as avow their allegiance to the Most High?

FOURTHLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant are the next branch of this subject.

1. THAT reformation, which advanced by covenant-renovation in the days of Aza, had made considerable progress under the auspicious reigns of both Aza and Jehoshaphat. The reigns of these two princes, taken together, lasted about sixty years; and reformation, on the whole, was favoured and protected by them all the while; a thing seldom known in the Jewish, or any other church. The steps.

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by which religion advanced were, First, He took away the HIGH PLACES and GROVES, as well as brake down the monuments of idolatry. The learned are not quite agreed as to the meaning of the terms; so far as we can form a judgment of them, they were of two kinds: One species of them was destined to the purposes of idolatry; and the other sacred to the Most High God. With respect to those high places, which were seats of idolatry, there is not the least ground of doubt but that Jehoshaphat demolished them. This distinction may serve to remove the seeming difficulty: Where, on the one hand, it is said, "He took away the high places and the groves:" On the other, "Howbeit, the high places were not taken away*." The former importing such as had been prostituted to the purposes of idolatry: The latter such as had been sacred to

* 2 Chron. xvii. 6. compared with 2 Chron. xx. 33. No one thing is more certain than that there were high places and groves consecrated to idols: And it is equally plain, that good men worshipped the living God in high places. "The grand difficulty is, how to reconcile their sacrificing in other places besides the national altar; as, Gideon, at Ophrah; Manoah, in the country of Dan; Samuel, at Mispah, and Bethlehem, &c. with the Law, "Take heed to thyself, that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest. But in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, there shalt thou offer thy burnt-offerings, and there shalt thou do all that I command thee," Deut. xii. 13, 14. The best solution, I apprehend, is, That it was done by special divine direction and command, God having an undoubted

to the true God. Or, if this do not suffice, the first may denote the conduct of the prince, and the latter that of the people; as it follows, "For, as yet, the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers:" Whereas the heart of this good prince was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Thus idolatry was discouraged at court, though retained and practised in some distant places of the country.

—Again, Jehoshaphat stirred up the Levites to diligence in giving instructions to the people: "And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them: and went about through all the cities of Judah, and taught the people."—Thirdly, He restored the courts of judicature, both civil and sacred, which had gone into disuetude: "In Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies.—Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the King's matters." These were bound to inspect the morals of the people; and their care seems to have been crowned with a blessing.

doubted right to supersede his own positive laws when he pleases; and, as this is expressly asserted to have been done in David's case, mentioned 1 Chron. xxi. 18. it may the more reasonably be supposed in all the rest."

JENNINGS, Vol. II. p. 92.

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2. THE reformation, which was so happily advanced, had been awfully crushed by the affinity of the family of David with the house of Ahab. The edge of the Church's testimony, in Aha's reformation, pointed directly against the idolatry of the ten tribes. But, for political reasons perhaps, Jehoshaphat got his son Jehoram to marry Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, and she introduced idolatry into his family; which was greatly displeasing to God, and severely punished by him. Jehoshaphat probably meant to put a period to the war which had long subsisted between Israel and Judah; but he broke the peace with heaven, and brought a bloody sword into his own house. His heir slew all the rest of his sons as soon as he ascended the throne; and Athaliah murdered all the seed-royal when she understood that her first-born had died by the hand of Jehu. Thus, though the law condemning idolaters was not duly executed, yet vengeance did not suffer them to live. Athaliah, however, meant not so, neither did her heart think so: She intended to make the house of David like the house of her father Ahab; and, at once, to gratify her ambition, as well as secure herself from the victorious arms of Jehu, she grasped at the throne and sceptre of David. This gave additional security to the worship of Baal, which was practised during the six years of Athaliah's usurpation. This idol had his temple, to rival that

that which was built by Solomon; and his priest, to rival the priest of the Most High after the order of Aaron: But both fell a sacrifice to an injured people. Now it was necessary to make a reformation from such flagrant corruption; and to confirm this reformation by solemn covenanting. It was proper to remove the rubbish of idolatry, and also restore such parts of reformation as God had bestowed on their fathers; as well as to make such alterations in the sacred bond as their case, and the circumstances of their time required.

3. THE Lord had accomplished a most favourable revolution in the State,—prospering the enterprize of Jehoiada to restore the family of David unto the throne of Judah. The scheme was wisely concerted and vigorously executed, as well as faithfully concealed until it was ripe for execution: And every thing succeeded even to the most sanguine expectation. Now, such remarkable success called for a grateful acknowledgment; and covenant-
renovation was the fittest for their circumstances, and the best improvement of their deliverance.

LASTLY, I shall now make some REFLECTIONS on the whole.

1. SEE the justice of Heaven in avenging the shedding of innocent blood. God requires the blood of the children of Jehoshaphat at the hand of their brother: And that of the innocents of Jerusalem at the hand of Athaliah.

2. GOD over-rules the providential changes in kingdoms and nations for the good of his Church; and makes the efforts of the people, in favour of law and civil liberty, subservient to a work of reformation. The restoration of David's line was accompanied with the renovation of the Church's engagements to the Lord.

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DISSERTATION XI.

ON THE

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND JUDAH, IN THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

2 CHRON. XXIX. 10.

THE accounts of this transaction are still more sparing than those of the preceding one. We shall only,—I. Survey the Character of the Covenanters.—II. The Resolution into which they entered.—III. The Occasions of this Covenant.—And, IV. Deduce a few Inferences from the whole.

FIRST, I shall survey the CHARACTER of the Covenanters in this transaction.

1. **THE glorious party unto whom they were bound to surrender themselves is, THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL.** This designation was relative, and led the covenanters back to review the relation in which the Most High stood unto

unto them ; he was their own God, and their fathers God : And also to review the obligations they were under to be for him, and not for another. They were his covenanted people ; as he was their covenanted God, by virtue of the covenants of their ancestors. The Lord God of Israel was the character by which God saw meet to reveal himself under that œconomy.

2. THE persons devoting themselves are, King Hezekiah, with the children of Judah, and such of the ten tribes as submitted to his government. The active part which King Hezekiah took in this covenant, probably was a little extraordinary ; yet there was nothing in it either irregular in itself, or unbecoming his station and office : For, though he excited the proper officers of the Church to do their duty, as he well might in such a broken state of the Church, yet he did not wrest the administration of holy things out of their hands ; nor, like Uzziah, grasp them into his own. One of the most distinguished covenanters, then, was Hezekiah, a prince as eminent in his zeal for reformation as any of the line of David ; and signally rewarded by peculiar and miraculous deliverances from various afflictions. Happy in the succeeding part of his reign, and in almost every thing, except in being succeeded by such a son as Manasseh, who, in the beginning of his reign, proved the very worst of all his
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his race. With this monarch joined the rulers of the city of Jerusalem, and the Levites who had the charge of the temple, and all the congregation of the Lord. Matters had been suffered to sink to the lowest ebb in the days of Ahaz; but, all of a sudden, the Lord had spirited up a number to put hand to his work, to the great joy of Hezekiah and all the people: "And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people; for the thing was done suddenly." Happy covenanters,—a people prepared by the Lord!

SECONDLY, The RESOLUTION which these covenanters formed is the next thing before us. Said Hezekiah, "Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us*." The resolution is formed, indeed, by Hezekiah himself; but it was certainly intended as a public example, to excite unto public covenanting. Had he intended personal covenanting only, there was no need for announcing his intentions to the people; nor, in doing so, could he be well excused from ostentation. In this resolution we may,

1. OBSERVE the matter of it, viz. To MAKE A COVENANT with the Lord God of Israel.

* 2 Chron. xxix. 10.

The sacred phrase is, **TO CUT A COVENANT**. In one of the Abrahamic transactions the reason of this phrase has been explained *. When sacrifices were offered for covenant-ratification, the creatures were cut in twain, denoting the severity of the punishment incurred by covenant-violation: The violator deserved to be cut asunder, as the fœderal sacrifice had been when the covenant was ratified. This rite had also in it a representation of the substitution of Christ, the true sacrifice, in the place of the sinner; and of the separation of his soul from his body, as he was made a curse for us. Taking Hezekiah's resolution in this sense, it was accomplished when the whole congregation offered a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary; and the King and the congregation laid their hands upon the sacrifice, and the priests made reconciliation with the blood of the sacrifice upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel †. It is probable, however, that formal covenanting followed this solemn sacrifice. Along with the oblation of a sin-offering, there was either an explicit or implicit acknowledgment of sin; and this acknowledgment was a proper introduction to covenant-renovation. This sacrifice, then, was a fœderal one; and it was proper for Hezekiah to say, I have it in mine heart to cut a

* Dissert. II. Part ii.

† 2 Chron. xxix. 20—24.

DISSERTATION XI: 451

covenant, or divide a fœderal sacrifice, unto the Lord God of Israel.

2. NOTICE the firmness of this resolution, it was deeply laid ; even in his heart : “ Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant *,” &c. Or, WITH MY HEART, as others render it. This resolution was formed in his heart, and not merely by his tongue ; and it was as deeply fixed as wisely formed. Covenanting took up the heart of a prince ; it was really heart-work with him. He had laid sin to heart, on the one hand ; and he was ready to make a hearty dedication of himself unto God, on the other.

3. WE have a forcible motive unto this duty of covenanting with God : “ That his fierce wrath may turn away from us.” The Lord promiseth to accompany public reformation with public prosperity.

THIRDLY, We shall now attend unto the OCCASIONS of this Covenant. Between the beginning of the reign of Joash and that of Hezekiah there were not fewer than an hundred and twelve years. Some of the princes, who reigned in this interval, were favourers of

* Chron. xxix. 10. Nunc igitur cum corde meo, i. e. Hebraismus, postquam hæc vidi constitui, &c. Vatab. in Loc. As also Arias Montanus in his Version.

the reformation, indeed; but it was greatly crushed by the apostacy of Joash, after the death of Jehoiada. As long as the High-priest lived he was ready to promote the reparation of the temple, both by his royal edict and example; but he was no sooner dead than the princes of Judah flattered him into that idolatry from which they had been but lately reformed. They came and made obeisance to the king: Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols. Such is the inconstancy and inconsistency of many professors in almost every age! And, to add unto their guilt, when the Spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, and he testified against them, saying, "Why transgress ye the commandment of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper?" they stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. When persons fall into irreligion and impiety against God, it is not strange to see them guilty of ingratitude and cruelty to the best of men. The vengeance of heaven overtook that persecuting monarch: For he was visited with war abroad, and conspiracy at home. His own servants conspired against him, for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed. The state of reformation, however, advanced in the three following reigns:

reigns: For the Spirit of God witnesseth, notwithstanding various blemishes, **THEY DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.** The space of their reigns, taken altogether, exceeds eighty years; a period of Reformation still longer than the former one.

BUT this long day of reformation was succeeded with a dark night of horrid apostacy, in the reign of Ahaz; the darkest, by much, that had ever befallen the Jewish Church, since the accession of David's family unto the throne. Ahaz was not content with introducing the worship of idols into his kingdom; but, when punished for his idolatry, in the time of his distress he did trespass yet more against the Lord, by shutting up the gates of the house of the Lord, as well as putting forth his sacrilegious hands unto the sacred vessels and treasures. The Spirit remarks that he was eminent in wickedness; for, having specified his crime, he adds, "**THIS IS THAT KING AHAZ.**" The rubbish which filled the temple was so dreadfully enormous, as to hinder temple service until the Priests and Levites had performed the heavy task of clearing it. The altars of Baal had been erected in every corner of his city; and the vengeance of heaven, ever fervent against idolatry and false worship, had wasted his kingdom. Such was the dismal plight of Judah
when

when Hezekiah succeeded his father. Though Ahaz had sacrificed many of his children unto devils, yet Hezekiah seems to have been reserved by heaven for the purpose of restoring the worship of Jehovah, as well as repairing the temple. This covenant was made in pursuance of that reformation which Hezekiah had so happily begun, to induce these reformers to finish their testimony. These were the circumstances of the covenanters at this time. The children of Judah, in short, had to acknowledge their iniquity, and supplicate the removal of their plagues: Therefore, it was proper to return unto the Lord their God by covenant-renewal.

FOURTHLY, I shall now deduce a few INFERENCES from what has been offered.

1. GRACE comes not unto any by natural generation: Jotham begets a wicked Ahaz; THAT KING AHAZ good Hezekiah; and this last reformer a wicked Manasseh. The sons of God are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God who sheweth mercy.

2. THE work of reformation is more easily marred, by the example and edicts of wicked princes,

ces, and the supple, or perverse conduct of
 ile teachers, than it can be advanced by
 zealous and firm deportment of the most
 ly reformers. It was more easy for Ahaz
 break down the carved work of Zion, as
 axes and hammers, than for Hezekiah to
 d it up. With what amazing facility did
 z introduce the worship of Baalim; and per-
 e the deluded votaries of that idol to de-
 their most tender offspring to the most
 ul torments, in passing through the fire
 lech! How easily did Ahaz and Judah
 e in with those very Syrians whom God
 for the rod of their correction! Ahaz
 not more pleased with the altar of Da-
 us, than Urijah with the pattern which
 sent from thence unto Jerusalem: And,
 both were convinced that the god of
 altar was unable to deliver, by the de-
 tion of Damascus, did they set up this
 ge altar, and break down that of the
 High God. What gross stupidity? How
 ched the exchange! Yet there will, in all
 , be some men found wicked enough to
 ute the most impious commands that come
 a throne! The demolition of divine wor-
 is the more easily accomplished, as there
 usually more bad men than good in the
 d; and, even in good men themselves,
 corrupt and unrenewed part greatly pre-

3. AN universal obedience unto the law of God, and an universal attendance unto divine institutions, goes hand in hand with right covenanting, and is greatly influenced by it. It has usually been urged against this duty, by the neglectors of it, that covenanters lay a disproportionate stress upon it, and overlook, or undervalue other duties. But Hezekiah's practice shews the very reverse. Covenanting is so far from relaxing the obligation of the Law, that it affords an additional motive to keep it. It diffuseth its benign influence upon the heart, engaging it to respect all God's commandments.

DISSERTATION XII.

O N T H E

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND JUDAH, IN THE REIGN OF JOSIAH.

2 CHRON. xxxiv. 29—33. compared with 2 KINGS
xxiii. 1—3.

THIS is the last transaction which obtained while the first temple stood, and while the line of David swayed the sceptre. In attending to it, I shall,—I. Explain the Character and Circumstances of the Covenanters.—II. The Matter of this Covenant.—III. The Occasions of it.—IV. Improve the Subject.

FIRST, I shall explain the CHARACTER, and attend unto the CIRCUMSTANCES of these Covenanters. The first person mentioned is King Josiah. His agency in this matter deserves to be particularly considered. The sacred history bears testimony unto his early, and
* M m m most

most exemplary piety: He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left: And when he heard the law of God read in his ears, his heart was humbled, and he rent his clothes, and wept before God, in testimony of his genuine repentance. Josiah was also distinguished by his diligence and zeal for repairing the house of God: For the book of the covenant, which was the means of awakening Josiah and the inhabitants of Judah, was found by Hilkiah, when employed in the reparation of the temple; and this prince had contributed liberally for that reparation, both by his example and authority. As to the activity of this prince, in bringing the people into covenant, the sacred historian remarks, that he not only made a covenant himself, but also CAUSED the people to stand to it. The question is, If he drew the form of this covenant himself, and administered it unto the people; or, if he only excited the Priests and Levites to do their duty in this matter? The latter, to me at least, seems to be most probable: For it was accompanied with the reading of the Scriptures and dispensing the word. Now, there are none, as far as I know, who plead for magistrates taking upon them the administration of the word. The Jewish monarchs were obliged, indeed, to read it diligently for themselves, and by themselves;

selves; as appears from various precepts of the Mosaic Law; but they are never enjoined to read it to the people, much less to dispense it in such a solemn manner. The expression may be justified, viz. "He read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant," if he caused it to be done; for persons are said to do things, in the sacred style, when they excite others to do them, or cause them to be done. Thus Solomon is said to offer two and twenty thousand oxen*; while it was only the priest that offered them by his direction, and at his expense, at the dedication of his temple. And Josiah might cause the people to stand to this covenant, as well as Aza, by an act of the Sanhedrim, or supreme council of the nation, appointing the contemnors of it to be punished. But this matter has been explained already†. The rest of the covenanters were the whole congregation. The sacred writer describes them in the following terms: "The King sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the King went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the Priests, and the Levites, and all the people great and small‡:" And, in the parallel

* 1 Kings viii. 62. † Dissertation IX.

‡ 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29, 30.

place, the PROPHETS are added likewise. The elders were called together to settle what was to be done; and the people readily cooperated with them, and joined in the solemn service.

SECONDLY, I shall next consider the MATTER of this Covenant, or the various articles unto which they engaged: And they covenanted to “walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant *.”

I. THEY covenanted to WALK AFTER THE LORD, in opposition to those idols after which Manasseh and Amon had walked. When persons fell into idolatry, the Holy Ghost frequently styles their course, A walking AFTER other gods †; or, a seeking AFTER them. The expression imports, the emotion of the soul in acts of esteem and desire,—of complacency and delight, according to the various objects on which it terminated:—The persons being also initiated into the way of his worship, and practising accordingly. Walking after the Lord, in fine, cannot imply less than an imitation of him in holiness and righteousness, mer-

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31.

† Deut. viii. 19. xi. 28. xiii. 2. 1 Kings. xi. 10.

ey and truth; yea, in all his moral perfections.

2. THEY engaged to keep his COMMANDMENTS, and his TESTIMONIES, and his STATUTES *. The term rendered commandments is used to denote judicials, as I have already observed, or such political precepts as God gave out for the regulation of the Jewish commonwealth: And testimonies are, in this connection at least, expressive of moral precepts. They are styled TESTIMONIES because God has given a clear and full declaration of his will: He has not left us to guess at his mind, by dark hints; but has afforded such a degree of evidence, that nothing but a veiled heart and obstinate infidelity can resist. The

* 2 Chron xxxiv. 31. The word ועדות, HIS TESTIMONIES, is derived from עד, IDEM ESSE; because the testimony of a witness ought to be consistent with itself, and be always the same. The term is sometimes used in a very large sense, for the whole doctrines and precepts in the word: But, in the present connection, it is evidently limited unto moral precepts; as there are other words used to denote ceremonials and judicials. Nor is this sense of it infrequent in the Old Testament. "Testimonium quoque interdum significat ipsum Decalogum; atque adeo duas Tabulas, in quibus scriptus fuit, Exod. xl. 20. Levit. xvi. 13. Idco autem Decalogus vocatur Testimonium; quia Deus id dixit testatusque est de se, ac sua voluntate de que justitia et veluti debito, quod a nobis exigit." MATTHIAS FLACCIUS ILLYRICUS Clav. Script. apud vocem.

duty

duty of **KEEPING** these things has been explained above; of consequence, this transaction was covenant-renovation,—a reacting of what had been done in the days of their fathers; especially in the days of David. The manner of keeping these commandments, unto which they engaged, is particularly declared: **They bound themselves to it WITH ALL THE HEART, and WITH ALL THE SOUL.** But it is needless to repeat what has been already offered on this matter*. This is an evidence not obscure, that this was not a state covenant, as some would insinuate; for state covenants have only to do with the outward man: But it is peculiar to church covenants to reach the heart. True it is, the King is only mentioned, as being cordial in this matter; but it is plain, by comparing the accounts of this covenant, that the people copied this royal example: “And all the people stood to the covenant †.” The Sanhedrim appointed all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it; and the people readily complied with their injunction.

THIRDLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant are the third branch of our subject. This transaction obtained in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign; and between that and the first

* Dissertation IX. † 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

year of Hezekiah there intervened near an hundred years; for Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, Manasseh fifty-five, and Amos two. This century was filled up with various changes in the state of religion, and great variety of providential dispensations unto the church and kingdom of Judah.

I. THE kingdom of Judah had been greatly threatened by the Assyrian army, and wonderfully delivered without human aid; or even the exertion of their own power, in the use of means. The reason of God's chastising his people by the hand of this Assyrian, probably, was Hezekiah's league with Egypt, in direct violation of the covenant with the Lord God of their fathers. When God redeemed Israel from the hand of the Egyptians and of their gods, he expressly prohibited them from confederating with other nations; and he engrossed this article into that covenant which was executed immediately after they had sinned by making the golden calf. He had, in like manner, prohibited, in a particular manner, a confederacy with Egypt, as inconsistent with the design of the passover, which was a standing ordinance among them; and equally inconsistent with an humble dependance on him as head of the theocracy. But, although the correction was justly and severely inflicted, yet it must not be always continued. God will not contend

contend with his children for ever, neither will he be always wroth: For the spirits would fail before him, and the souls which he hath made. Wherefore he took the punishment of the Church's enemies into his own hand; and, when the Assyrian was in the highest hopes of victory, and elevated with the vilest pride, the Lord dispatched an angel who smote an hundred four-score and five thousand of his troops; and, when he decamped to Nineveh, he was assassinated by two of his sons, in the very temple of his god. Vengeance on such foes has been ever fraught with gracious deliverance to his Church and people.

2. HEZEKIAH misimproved this national deliverance, as well as that from his bodily affliction. The Lord himself complains, That Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: Therefore, there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Though they besought the Lord to remove their affliction, yet, when he accomplished their wishes, they forgot to return unto him in the way of covenant-renewal. There was great repentance; for both Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem humbled themselves for the pride of their heart: But yet their humiliation was not correspondent to the offence. There was some reformation

formation also in the latter days of Hezekiah ; but it was not a covenanted reformation : Hence the vengeance was only deferred, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah ; but it was still reserved, and not averted. Now, it was proper for the Church, in Josiah's days, to reform in the way of covenant-renovation, as ever they would avoid that horrid sin of ingratitude, with which Hezekiah is justly blamed.

3. THE reformation which Hezekiah had so happily begun in his younger years, and which continued, in some measure, all his days had been destroyed by the dreadful wickedness of Manasseh and Amon. Manasseh seems to have exceeded Ahaz himself in wickedness. He built the high-places which his father had broken down, and reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. He carried his idolatry to such a height, as to set up his altars in opposition to God's altar, in his very presence, and in the house called by his name: And, to finish his wickedness to a degree unknown to his ancestors, he used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards ; and, not content with the practice of idolatry himself, he caused Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before

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the children of Israel. And such as complied not with the times fell a sacrifice to the rage of his idolatry: "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another."—And, though there was great reformation in the latter end of Manasseh's reign, yet the people did not return unto the Lord by covenant-renovation: Wherefore, it was proper to put hand to that work which Manasseh had neglected. It must also be observed, that, though this method of reformation was essayed, yet there was a great defect in it, as Josiah and the rest of the reformers did not make a thorough search into the iniquities of their fathers, nor yet a suitable acknowledgment of them; especially the sin of blood-shedding in the days of Manasseh. Hence we find God himself prosecuting the quarrel in after generations. He stirred up the Chaldeans to avenge this quarrel: "Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did: And also for the innocent blood that he shed (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood), which the Lord would not pardon *."

4. JOSIAH had begun a reformation from the idolatry and superstition into which his

* 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4.

fore-fathers had been plunged. This reformation had been advancing for eighteen years; and, while the priests were removing the rubbish which had been cast into the most holy place, they found that copy of the law which was kept in the temple: This book they carried unto the king, who, upon hearing the curses of it read in his ears, rent his clothes, in token of his fear and sincere repentance. And, that the whole congregation might be affected in the same manner, this excellent prince called together a solemn assembly of the elders and people unto Jerusalem, and caused the book of the law to be read in their audience, as a necessary preparative for solemn covenanting. The pieces of reformation which Josiah had accomplished, previous to his finding the book of the law, were various; and it was proper to take the congregation engaged, by covenant, to each of them. This good king took the administration of his kingdom into his own hand when he was only sixteen years of age: And, even previous to that period, he walked in the way of David his father. In the twelfth year of his reign, he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high-places, and the groves; and to break down the altars and images of Baalim, as well as to burn the bones of the priests upon their altars. On the other hand, he spared no expense that was requisite for repairing the temple of the

Lord. Like Hezekiah, and other reformers who had gone before him, he was equally careful to restore the worship of the true God as to destroy every monument of idolatry. There is one thing which ought by no means to be omitted, The neighbouring country of Ephraim and Manasseh, being under the dominion of the king of Assyria, but inhabited partly by some remnant of the ten tribes, Josiah carried his reformation thither likewise ; and, in particular, he demolished the altar and the high-place at Bethel, which Jeroboam erected to make Israel to sin. Thus the Lord accomplished his prediction, which he gave out as early as the days of Jeroboam himself ; and glorified his faithfulness by raising up Josiah for that purpose *.

5. THE canon of Scripture was greatly enlarged by the inspired prophets : Now it was fit the Church should receive and observe every notification of the divine will ; as well as keep pure and entire all the ordinances which are appointed by it. There were two reasons for the enlargement of the sacred canon at this time, in subordination to the sovereign pleasure of God : First, to support the Church, and true believers in her, under such particular trials as exercised her faith and patience : For example,

* 1 Kings xiii. 2.

the prophecies of Isaiah were given to support her under the severe trials she felt by reason of Ahaz's apostacy, and Sennacherib's invasion. And various other prophets prophesied for the same purpose; such as Micah and Hosea. The prophet Habakkuk probably prophesied in the dark night of Manasseh's reign in like manner. Secondly, To prepare the children of God for such afflictions as were before them. The inspired history exhibited to them a stock of experience, the experiences, as well as the falls of eminent saints: And the prophecies presented them with great consolation, in the promise of the coming of the Messiah, and the preservation of the Jewish monarchy until that happy time, on the one hand; and the certain prospect of their enemies destruction on the other: For, while the prophets announced the vengeance of God against the finally impenitent, by means of the Assyrians and Babylonians; they, at the same time, held up, in their typical glass, the destruction of these empires. Thus, faith might look through the dark night of the Babylonish captivity, and contemplate, with pleasure, the reformation which should ensue on the back of it.

FOURTHLY, I shall now subjoin a few REFLECTIONS on the whole.

I. God

1. GOD sometimes reserves the best, of men for the worst of times. Good Hezekiah is raised up between a wicked Ahaz and a wicked Manasseh; and good Josiah between a wicked Amon and a wicked Jehoahaz. Such good men are the pillars of the earth; through the means of their prayers, and that they may be safely housed in the triumphant Church, the day of divine forbearance is prolonged, as the day of vengeance is deferred. It had fared ill with backsliding Judah much sooner, if God had not bestowed on her such men as a reforming Josiah, and a weeping Jeremiah.

2. THE Lord may reward and countenance a work of reformation when there are several things attending it still calling for reformation. The Lord approved of Josiah's reformation, and made it the means of deferring his judgments; but it was accompanied with the want of sincerity in many of the people, and the want of due search into the iniquities of their fathers in all.

3. THE reading of the holy Scriptures is the means of awakening, both unto a sense of sin and duty. In times of ignorance, idolatry, superstition, and corruption, the Scriptures are concealed from, or, at least, slighted by a people; yea, such has been the audacity of a certain society, who presumes to appropriate unto
itself

itself the name of **THE CHURCH**—the only Church on earth, that it has locked up the precious treasure of the holy Scriptures in an unknown tongue ; and a dreadful anathema hangs over the head of him who dares to peep into this sacred depositum. The dark times of Popery and the reigns of Manasseh and Amon were, in some respects, analogous ; particularly in ignorance of the Scriptures : And the reading of the Scriptures produced a similar effect in Josiah's time with that at the Reformation from Popery. It was blessed, at both, for awakening unto a dread of sin, and for exciting unto formal covenanting.

4. God sometimes brings his people into formal covenanting with himself, as the means of preparing them for the day of affliction. He makes some take the faster hold of him, in order to their taking him along with them into the furnace : And others are permitted to aggravate their iniquities by a pretending to take hold of him, when, in fact, they are about to renounce him, and he is about to punish them for their apostacy and deceit, that they may fill up the measure of their iniquity. This people was just on the brink of the Babylonish captivity : And the people of our own land covenanted but a little before they were cast into the furnace of a long and grievous persecution.

persecution. How some were thereby fitted to bear their fiery trial, and others accumulated their guilt, are plain to all in the least conversant with the history of those times. God grant, that a furnace may not be a-heating for covenanters in this sinning land ; or, if it must needs be, that covenanting may be blessed to prepare for that evil day.

DISSER.

DISSERTATION XIII.

ON THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND HIS CHURCH, IN THE DAYS OF EZRAH:

EZRAH x. 3—5.

I SHALL pursue our subject, in this Transaction, by attending to the following particulars :—I. The Character of the Covenanters.—II. The Minister, by whose agency they entered into this Covenant.—III. The Matter of the Covenant.—IV. The Occasions of it.—V. Its Confirmations.—Then make some Reflections on the whole:

FIRST, I shall consider the CHARACTER of the Covenanters: The account of them, which is afforded in the inspired history, is to the following purpose: “ They were persons returned from the Babylonish captivity, and engaged in repairing the city of Jerusalem; but not sufficiently weaned from connection with
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the nations: Hence, guilty of affinity to idolaters, so as to expose themselves unto the wrath of God. They were not so hardened in sin, however, as to condemn the warning which was given them from the word of God; but, when they heard the threatening it denounced against such an offence, they TREMBLED AT GOD'S WORD. The persons affected at these threatenings were, "A VERY GREAT CONGREGATION, out of all Israel, of men women, and children; even such as had rendered themselves obnoxious to them, and these were the Princes and Rulers, the Priests and the Levites, and the people of Israel." Had not these got enough of the people of the land? Yes, more than enough; but how often have persons formed connections to their hurt! How often have those who were separated to God associated with his enemies? This people, then, were the offspring of covenanting Jews, but chargeable with acting a part altogether unworthy of their solemn engagements, and of their peculiar privileges.—A people, however, that had been endued with the grace of repentance; as well as enabled to make suitable professions of it.

SECONDLY, I shall attend unto the CHARACTER of Ezrah, who was the Minister in this Transaction. The first notice we have of him is at the Persian Court: Having preferred a petition unto the king, he found favour before

fore Artaxerxes, his counsellors, and all his mighty princes; and got an edict, authorising him to lead unto Jerusalem such of the people of Israel, and of the Priests and Levites as had a willing mind for the journey; at the same time, the king was induced to contribute liberally for the service of the temple, and to grant full authority, that whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, be done for the house of the God of heaven. Ezrah himself was of the sacerdotal line; being the son, or grandson of Seraiah, the high-priest, who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar, when he stormed Jerusalem. He was also a person of distinguished gifts and uncommon learning; hence, he was styled a READY SCRIBE of the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given*.

Nor

† Scribes appear to have been a particular order of men among the Jews, devoted to literature. Their origin, however, is not easily investigated. Some make it as ancient as the giving of the Law: Others fix it in the days of David; but Spanheim the elder thinks it was by no means so ancient. Others have brought it as low as the days of Jehoshaphat; while some carry it still lower, even to the days of Ezrah. But, whatever be the æra at which this order formally commenced, yet it was always necessary that some persons should execute this office, even from the time at which the law was committed to writing. The Scribes have been properly enough distributed into two classes; namely, CIVIL and ECCLESIASTIC. The Civil Scribe is mentioned as early as the days of David, 2 Sam. viii. 17. Nor is the Sacred one of a later date, 1 Chron. xxvii. 32. Of the former there were various ranks, from the common notary to the

any enquire Whether he brought the people into this bond as Artaxerxes's governor, or as a priest of the Most High God? The sacred history answers, It was as a priest: "And Ezra the priest,—and all of them by their names, who were separated, sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter *." As a priest he drew up the bond; and, as a priest, he looked after the fulfilment of their vow.

THIRDLY, I shall now consider the **BOND** which was framed and sworn on this occasion, and which constituted the **MATTER** of this Covenant. There is, besides confession of sin, a general clause respecting the whole of God's revealed will, and a particular one adapted to that reformation which their case required.

1:—THEY engage unto genuine repentance and suitable confession of sin: "Make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers." The glorious party with whom they were to covenant is, the **LORD GOD OF THEIR FATHERS**. This covenanted character gave them great encouragement to confess their iniquities unto him; and to say unto him, "Pardon, we beseech thee, our iniquities, as thou hast done from Egypt's land until now." The duty of confession has not only sin, but likewise bene-

* Ezr. x. 10. with verse 16.

fits for the object of it, as well as truth : Hence it was penitential, eucharistic, and ecclesiastic, The import of ecclesiastic confession will be afterwards explained.

2. THEY engage TO DO THE PLEASURE of the Lord God of their fathers. The pleasure of God, in this text at least, extends not only unto positive institutions, which originate in the good pleasure of God ; but also unto all the acts of natural worship, which are ever well pleasing in his sight. Thus, angels are said to DO HIS PLEASURE, as they fulfil God's commandments in a more exalted degree than imperfect men. This article, then, must include all the known will of God, the moral, ceremonial, and judicial laws ; with all that advantageous light in which they were placed by after revelations. This was the general clause in their covenant, which, though general, was well understood ; because the particulars included had been often explained in former covenants.

3. THEY engaged TO SEPARATE FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND, AND FROM THE STRANGE WIVES. The particular sin which was charged on them was, their confederacy and affinity with the people of the nations round about. The Jews, probably despairing of the divine protection, had entered into a league, offensive and defensive, with some of their

their neighbours; and, to establish it on a sure foundation, they had joined in affinity with them likewise. The iniquity of such a connection laid a just foundation for dissolving it: For, when God covenanted with Israel at Sinai, he took them expressly engaged, neither to confederate with the people of the land, nor to take wives from among them*. There were some reasons for this article of peculiar weight with that nation; such as, The preservation of the seed of Jacob separate and entire, especially from such nations as were doomed to destruction: To typify the purity of the spouse and bride of Christ, which is without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: Hence we find Paul allowing the converted Gentile to keep his unconverted wife, under the New Testament dispensation, if she was willing to abide with him. Idolatry, or irreligion, does not nullify the bond of marriage under the New Testament, as it did under the old; tho' it is unlawful still to be unequally yoked: Wherefore, in the instance to which Paul refers †, the marriage obtained while both were heathens, and the husband afterwards converted, while the wife remained in heathenism. Under the New Testament, however, as well as under the old, in ordinary cases at least, mixed marriages of saints with infidels are ever to be reprobated; for what part hath he that

* Dissertation V. Part ii. † 1 Cor. vii. 12.

believeth

believeth with an infidel? But, to return unto the Jews, it has been objected to Ezra, "That this article is extremely severe and inhumane, if not a formal violation of the law of nature, both as to the contract of marriage and the education of children." To remove which, it may be observed, That there was room for an alleviation of this supposed rigour, by the wives becoming proselytes; accordingly, the magistrates set about examining into this matter: And, as to such as continued in infidelity, the marriage was, in itself, as null, to all intents and purposes, as if it had never been solemnized; infidelity being as sufficient a reason to vacate it as the nearest degrees of consanguinity among all civilized nations: Nor were the children of these strange wives put on a worse footing than Ishmael, when he was expelled from his father's house; for it does not appear, that either Abraham or the fathers of those children were precluded from inspecting their education, or supplying their necessities, until they could provide for themselves; though they might not retain the mothers in their company, nor constitute these illegitimate children heirs of the promised inheritance.

FOURTHLY, The OCCASIONS of this Covenant merit our attention in the next place. The interveening space of time was filled up with some very remarkable revolutions in the

* P p p

kingdoms

kingdoms of this world; and some most interesting vicissitudes in the Church.

1. GOD had executed his dreadful threatening on the kingdom of Judah, which he had denounced against it on account of their idolatry. He had given them frequent warning of his coming wrath, which was, in a great measure slighted; and slighted warnings made the torrent more rapid when, at last, it broke forth. He determined to bear with them forty prophetic days from that covenant-renovation which obtained in the days of Josiah. The preceding prophets gave a general view of those judgments which Jeremiah and Ezekiel more particularly delineated. Jerusalem had been laid desolate by the Chaldean army; the inhabitants of it slain, or carried away captive for the space of seventy years*. As to the æra of the captivity, it seems to have commenced in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim; for in it Jerusalem was taken, and Judah made tributary to the king of Babylon: And exactly seventy years took place between that event and the edict of Cyrus to rebuild the temple. If you fix the commencement of these years as low as the time when Jerusalem was burnt, their period will exactly coincide with the decree of Darius to advance the work of temple-building, after it had been, for a

* Jer. xxv. 11, 12. xxix. 10.

time, suspended: Or, in fine, if you fix the commencement of the captivity at the time when Nebuzar-adan completed the desolation of the land, the conclusion will exactly coincide with the celebration of the first passover, immediately after the dedication of the second temple. But, as Dr Newton justly observes, the first captivity and restoration were the principal subject of this prophecy.

2. THE Lord had executed judgment on Babylon, even that nation which he had used as the rod of correction for his people. The destruction of this empire is so striking and terrible, that God makes it the emblem of his vengeance on all his enemies in after times. Judah deserved what he got, indeed, at the hand of God; and he was greatly culpable, even in the sight of men: But Babylon punished them to gratify his cruelty, and conquered them, and other nations, to gratify his pride. He not only despised the Jews, but also blasphemed the God whom they worshipped: And the vessels of his house must grace the revels of Babylon's luxurious prince. In that night was King Belshazzar slain! This dreadful catastrophe tended to execute God's purposes in various respects: It removed one of the four grand monarchies out of the way, to make room for the more glorious kingdom of the Messiah.—It also tended to illustrate the justice of divine providence, in the punishment of such

nations as persecuted his Church. As Babylon beheld Zion's desolation with cool indifference, if not with diabolical satisfaction, Zion might say of her again, "Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and ye holy prophets; for God hath avenged us on her. In one hour is thy judgment come." The destruction of Babylon, in one word, at once figured out the destruction of Satan's kingdom, which retains sinners as captives; and paved the way for the return of the Jews unto their own land: For the Chaldean empire and the Babylonish captivity terminated together, and both were finished by the same instrument,

3. THIS covenant-renewal obtained after God had brought his people back again to their own land. The set time for their deliverance was now come. Said God, by Jeremiah, "Thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years shall be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place." Now, renewed evidences of divine veracity on the part of God, called for renewed engagements on the part of his people. As God gave them an opportunity to celebrate temple-ordinances in their own land, so it became them to resolve on the observation of them, and every other duty.

4. THE work of the Lord had been greatly impeded by the suggestions of enemies, and edicts

edicts of the Persian monarch obtained in consequence of them. When these could not be procured, they were put off with interdicts, and wearied out with delays. Cambyfes, the son of Cyrus, succeeded his father in the Empire; and, as respect for his father's memory forbade him to revoke the edict which had been granted in their favour, so the insinuations of the Samaritans easily prevailed with him to defeat its design. But his successor, SMERDES the magian, who, in the sacred page, is styled Artaxerxes, unmoved by such regard, and unawed by the fear of God, readily hearkened to the accusations of the enemies of the Jews, and strictly prohibited them from proceeding any farther in building the temple. This put a stop unto that work until the second year of Darius Hystaspis. How often have sycophants tried, and with too much success, to persuade weak princes that the prosperity of the Church is incompatible with the interests and prerogatives of majesty! How often has God tried the faith and patience of his children, by permitting his work, when happily begun, to be, for a time, marred and reproached, both by pretended friends and open enemies!

5. HAGGAI and Zechariah could scarcely prevail with them to renew their endeavours, even after the decree of the MAGIAN might have been supposed to have expired with himself.

self. The chain of providences which issued in finishing of the temple was truly wonderful: The fraud of Smerdes being detected, and Darius, by stratagem, established in his stead; and the Jews having put hand to the work under his auspices, the Samaritans practised incessantly on the governor of Syria, persuading him, that the conduct of the Jews was not only without all authority, but also directly opposite to the interest of the empire. When he enquired at the Jews themselves, they referred him to the edict which Cyrus had granted in their favour: But, distrusting their veracity, he wrote to the court, that he might be certified as to what they asserted. Darius, having searched the records, found the decree of Cyrus; and, as he had married Cyrus's daughter, he thought he could not do less honour to his father-in-law, than confirm and enlarge the edict he had granted. He bestowed on the Jews more ample revenues, for defraying their expenses; and greater security than Cyrus had granted: So that they built and finished.

6. AFTER the dedication of the temple, the Jews, by the good hand of God upon them, had enjoyed their privileges, and celebrated their ordinances for the space of fifty years. The temple was dedicated in the sixth year of Darius: He reigned, in all, thirty-six years. Xerxes, his son and successor, twenty-one years: And this transaction obtained in the seventh

or eighth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who came to the throne immediately after him. Such a long space of public tranquillity, and the countenance and protection of the civil powers, could scarcely fail of producing considerable corruption of manners. It seldom happens, at least, that such a long scene of prosperity has been suitably improved. We find the Jews greatly sunk in various corruptions when Ezra came to Jerusalem. They are charged with mingling themselves with the people of the land, and doing according to their abominations,—taking of the daughters of the land for themselves, and their sons, for wives: So that the holy seed was greatly corrupted; and the hand of the princes was high in the provocation. Such universal corruption rendered a reformation highly proper;—such sinful mixtures rendered a separation absolutely necessary.

. 7. THE Lord, in divine sovereignty, had conferred recent favours upon this sinning people. Artaxerxes Longimanus, who is probably the Ahasuerus mentioned in Scripture, granted unto Ezra, and the whole Church and nation of the Jews, an edict, attended with greater solemnity than usual; being given by the Persian monarch and his seven counsellors, the highest authority of the empire; and containing more ample grants than those of any former monarch, empowering Ezra to celebrate

brate the Jewish worship at the public expenſe ; and alſo, to ſet up courts of the laſt reſort, according to the Jewish conſtitution *. Thus was Jeruſalem built, not in reſpect of its walls and bars, indeed ; but in reſpect of its polity, laws, and governours : For it is rule and government that conſtitute a city. This was the BUILDING OF THE CITY foretold by Gabriel, I preſume ; and the commencement of the ſeventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, which ſhould elapſe prior to the exciſion of the Meſſiah.

FIFTHLY, The CONFIRMATIONS of this Covenant is the next branch of our ſubject. And it will be found to have been ratified,

1. BY ſolemn promiſe, “ And Ezra the prieſt ſtood up and ſaid unto them, Ye have tranſgreſſed, and taken ſtrange wives, to encreaſe the treſpaſs of Iſrael. Now, therefore, make confeſſion unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleaſure, and ſeparate yourſelves from the people of the land, and from the ſtrange wives. Then all the congregation answered, with a loud voice, As thou haſt ſaid, ſo muſt we do †.”

2. IT was a SWORN Covenant, “ Then Ezra aroſe, and made the Chief Prieſts, and the Le-

* Ezz. vii. 25, 26.

† Ezz. x. 10, 11, 12.

vites,

vites, and all Israel, to **SWEAR**, that they should do according to this word; and they **SWARE**."

3. As **Ezrah** was well acquainted with the example of the Church in former times, we have reason to conclude, that it was a **WRITTEN** Covenant, as well as former ones; but, as this circumstance is not recorded, we shall not insist on it.

IT is now time to finish this subject with a very few **REFLECTIONS**.

1. **THE** Church may, and ought to covenant with the living God, when many genuine saints neglect, or hesitate as to this duty, on the one hand; and enemies make great opposition to it, on the other. Not a few of the Jews preferred a place in **Babylon** unto their own possession in the promised land; and, by this means, deprived themselves of an opportunity of joining in this work: Yea, more Jews probably staid in **Babylon** than those who returned.

2. **GREAT** deliverances call for suitable improvement, and grateful remembrance. If persons are delivered by God, is it too much for them to be devoted to him? It was long before the Jews made this return; but providence compelled them to do it at the last.

3. **SOLEMN COVENANTING** may be performed, when the civil powers of that people who

* Q q q

covenant

covenant are of a religion different from that which is sworn to in the sacred bond ; and yet these covenanters may, and ought to be strictly loyal ; giving ready obedience to such magistrates in their lawful commands. This is a case so much in point to present covenanting, that it deserves to be carefully surveyed on all sides. The enemies of the Jews forged an accusation against them, which has frequently been of great service to their successors : Said they, If this people be permitted to carry their designs into execution, they will foment rebellion ; they will not pay toll, tribute, and custom : But these covenanters gave a practical confutation of this calumny ; shewing, that there is an eternal difference between the cause of God and that of rebellion ; though the former has been often branded with the name of the latter. A people may be so circumstanced, as to continue under the same engagements to God as did their fathers, tho' they be widely different from them as to their political state. Such was the case of the Jews at this time ; and such is our case. In both Churches, tho' the covenanters are sprung from covenanting ancestors ; yet both yield obedience to non-covenanted magistrates ; and also proceed in the line of duty by covenant-renewal, altho' they have not the concurrence of the supreme magistrate. In both cases, covenanters are under great bondage ; yet strictly loyal, not for fear of wrath, but for conscience sake.

DISSERTATION. XIV.

ON THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND HIS CHURCH, IN THE DAYS OF NEHEMIAH.

NEHEMIAH ix. 38. x. 1—39.

THIS is the last Transaction transmitted to us in the Old Testament; but by no means the least signal. The sacred historian ascertains,—I. The Persons Covenanting.—II. The Character of the Minister, by whose instrumentality they were brought to perform this duty.—III. The Matter of this Covenant.—IV. The Manner in which they performed it.—V. The Occasions of this Transaction.—VI. The Solemn Confirmations of it.—After a short survey of each of these, we shall subjoin some Improvement.

FIRST, I shall attend unto the **PERSONS** Covenanting.

1. **THE** first order of persons is, “**Our Princes** *.” This is the same order with these mentioned Dissertation VI.

2. **THE** “**Levites.**” The whole tribe of Levi, except the family of Aaron. The peculiar constitution of this tribe deserves more particular consideration than I can here undertake. Let it suffice, in this place, to observe, That God took them instead of the first-born, and set them apart to the service of the temple; as also, assigned them their task in instructing the rest of the tribes,—appointing them cities to live in,—tythes for an honourable maintenance, seeing they were excluded from having any inheritance among their brethren. As this tribe was devoted to God’s service, so it was proper they should be forward in his work. They were divided into three classes: The first waited on the Priests, the sons of Aaron, to purify the holy things,—to prepare the shew-bread, flour, wine, oil, and every thing else for the sacrifice; and to kill the sacrifices, if there were more work of this kind than the Priests could accomplish. The next class formed the temple choir, consisting of both singers and players on instruments. The third are styled porters, who kept the doors of the temple, and had the charge of it; and probably received such oblations as were offered at it.

* Nch. ix. 38.

3. A THIRD order of persons covenanting at this time are, "Our Priests." This comprehended the whole family of Aaron, even to the exclusion of that of Moses: For, though he was the first man in the kingdom, he suffered his seed to sink down among the rest of the Levites.

4. THE next order specified is that of "Nethinims *." This designation is not to be found but in books written after the captivity; for such, I presume, are the books of Chronicles. The order of persons unto which it belonged, however, was much more ancient. They were originally the Gibeonites, who, by fraud, obtained a league with the Israelites soon after they came into the land of Canaan: For which Joshua condemned them to the most laborious offices of the tabernacle; such as, hewing of wood and drawing of water for the sacrifice. But it is conjectured that David added some other strangers to their number, when he appointed them unto the service of the Levites. Those Nethinims who returned, were certainly the best of that order: The rest having preferred a place in Chaldea unto the service of

* **נְתִינִים**, DEDITI. "Erantque Gibeonitæ, qui ob fraudem populo Israelitico facta a Josua servi publici constituti Jos. ix. 21. Et postea Davide ad ministerium Levitarum DEDITI, Ezr viii. 20." HENRIC. OPITIT. in vocem.

the temple ; but those Nethinims choose rather to serve God, in a state not greatly different from that of slaves, than stand on an equal footing with the rest of the children of the captivity in Babylon. Few, comparatively, were of this spirit, as Josephus declares * : The better part being the smaller number in almost every order of men.

5. THE NOBLES of Judah are another order of persons covenanting at this time. They appear to have taken the lead in this duty : The rest are said to cleave unto their brethren the NOBLES. This is a designation of general import ; if we consult the Scripture use of the term, we will find it applied to a vast variety of objects. Here it may denote the principal Jews ; for it appears that the nobles of Judah, at that time, were ringleaders, like our nobles at the Reformation from Popery, in the work of the Lord.

6. AGAIN, the sacred historian mentions such as “ had separated themselves from the people of the land.” Their sin consisted in mixing with them, and learning of them their way : Hence, there was a particular article in this covenant respecting their separation from them. This people entered into covenant with God,

* JOSEPH. De Bello Judaico, Lib. II. cap. xvii.

male and female, their sons and their daughters, who had arrived at the exercise of their reason, even such as were capable of doing it with knowledge and understanding.

SECONDLY, I shall now attend unto the CHARACTER of the Minister, by whose instrumentality they entered on this work. The ministers administering it were the Levites, indeed ; but Nehemiah had a principal share in the reformation, and covenant-renovation which followed it. The congregation was assembled by his orders, and animated by his example. Nehemiah was probably of the tribe of Levi ; but, as far as I have been able to judge, his genealogy cannot be reckoned. There are other things, however, of which we may be abundantly certain : He filled an high office at the Persian court ; and, at the same time, possessed a qualification rarely to be met with in courtiers : He was frequently employed in ejaculatory prayer, even in the presence of the Persian monarch : He is the most signal example of this duty in all the book of God : His ardour for the welfare of the Church was equal to his piety ; and this made him improve his high station for her benefit and advantage. Having obtained leave from Artaxerxes Longimanus to go unto Jerusalem, and authority to govern the returned captives, he gave equal proof of his courage and diligence, as well as his

his ability to rule,—stirring up the Princes, Priests, and people, unto repentance *.

THIRDLY, It is now time to consider the **MATTER** of this Covenant: “And they entered into an oath to walk in God’s law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes: And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: And if the people of the land bring ware, or any victuals on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt,” &c. Here I observe,

1. **THIS** transaction bore a reference unto the whole of the sacred system, and included a renovation of all former covenants. Thus,

* From Nehemiah’s account of himself, he held the office of the King’s Cup-bearer when at Shushan; and of the Tirshatha when at Jerusalem: But what is meant by the Tirshatha? The original word is of doubtful derivation; hence the learned have taken liberty to offer their conjectures. Some reckon it is compounded of **שָׁחַת** and **הָחִיר**, **QUI DISPENSAVIT POTUM**, **MUNSTER** on **Ezra**. Others from a Persian word which signifies **SEVERE**; such as **CASTELLUS**, **MENINSKI**, &c. Hence, they conclude, that it imports the Persian monarch’s Viceroy. **Ezrah** succeed **Zerubbabel** in this office, as he was succeeded by **Nehemiah**.

they

they engaged to walk according to the Mosaic system, and observe morals and ceremonials, as well as judicials, according to their various designations, formerly explained.

2. THERE was an explicit renovation of such precepts as they had remarkably violated; such as Sabbath-breaking, mixing with the heathen, usury, oppression, &c. Now it was proper to make a formal renunciation of these sins, and a formal engagement unto the opposite duties; as a general and material adherence unto them was not a sufficient testimony and barrier against the opposite sins.

3. THEY made such alterations, and additions unto former bonds, as their circumstances required. The style of Covenants, prior to the captivity, would be, "Our King, our Princes," &c. But, as the Jews had now no king of their own religion, it was only, "Our Princes," &c. Again, They settled the necessary expenses of the temple-service, and made a regulation to this purpose, in the form of a poll tax. The expenses of the temple and tabernacle had been defrayed by other sources before the captivity; such as the redemption of the first-born, &c. But these sources being decreased, as the number of the people was impaired, they judged a poll tax the fittest vein they could strike on this occasion.

FOURTHLY, The sacred historian delineates the MANNER in which they set about this work.

1. THEY covenanted with knowledge and understanding. It is by no means improbable that ignorant persons were restrained; for, when Nehemiah enumerates their sons and their daughters, he limits them thus: "Every one having KNOWLEDGE and UNDERSTANDING." At any rate, the covenanters were well instructed, Ezra having read many lectures to them on this duty. The matter was of too great importance to be rushed upon with precipitation.

2. THEY covenanted with the deepest humility and reverence. Accordingly, this and the former transaction have some excellencies superior to any of the foregoing ones. The confession of their sins, and God's goodness unto them, are more particularly delineated than on former occasions. The ninth chapters of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah afford the most excellent models and patterns for this duty of solemn confession; and are also standing evidences of the humble and penitent frame unto which those persons were brought on these occasions. Could persons be brought unto such a humble disposition, their objections and difficulties in the way of covenanting would be more

more than half removed. But, are not many, too many, disposed to say I am innocent!

3. **THEY** covenanted almost universally. There was a congregation of more than forty thousand, made up of persons of all ranks, as well as different ages and sexes. There were few ceremonial duties in which females were engaged; they were exempted, in particular, from attendance on the solemn feasts, while the males were enjoined to attend three times a-year. But, as covenanting was a moral duty, and as females had concern in the whole of practical religion, they were obliged to join in it as well as males.

FIFTHLY, I must now attend unto the **OCCASIONS** of this Covenant. The interval between this transaction and that which was executed under the ministry of Ezra, above described, was not less than twelve years. In that space of time, there had been a relapse into those sins from which they had been reformed by the ministry of Ezra, and that covenant-renovation which he directed in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. Now, this covenant obtained in the twentieth year of his reign. Such is the versatility of men, even of gracious persons, that they are soon turned aside from the path of holiness!

1. **THIS** covenant-renovation obtained after the people of God had been greatly alarm-

ed by that bloody edict which Haman procured against them; and that after they had been delivered by a most signal interposition of Providence. Ambitious Haman being greatly piqued at Mordecai, who declined to give him the homage expected, disclaimed to take vengeance on an individual; but aimed at the utter extermination of the whole race. The edict was not only granted but published; and the day of its execution determined, by lot, to be on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of the thirteenth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. Divine Providence ordered matters so, as to put it off till this time, that the Jews might be, in some measure, prepared for the evil day. Mad with superstition, their enemies cast lots from month to month, and day to day, from the first unto the twelfth month of the twelfth year of his reign; and, at last, determined to execute it at the distance of time above specified. Nor had they any dread as to the difficulty of execution arising from the delay, the laws of the Medes and Persians being irreversible. That it was the thirteenth, and not the twelfth year of Artaxerxes, on which they intended the execution of the edict, is evident from the date of that which prevented the ruin of the Jews: It bore date from the twenty-third day of the third month of the thirteenth year of that reign: But, if the other edict had been executed on the last month of the twelfth year, it had come too late. That it was

was the thirteenth, and not the twelfth year, in which the edict of Esther's procurement was granted, is evident, as Haman did not fix on a LUCKY day until the twelfth month of the twelfth year of this reign; and it is not to be supposed, that he would divulge his purpose before he came to a fixed resolution as to the time of putting it into execution. Nor could they provide against its effects, by a counter edict, before they were warned of their danger.

—Divine Wisdom, however, began to counteract Haman's scheme before it was hatched. In the seventh year of this monarch, the tenth month of that year (the same month, and the same year, in which Ezra had set about the foregoing covenant); did Esther become queen of Persia: As Mordecai declared to her, she came to the kingdom FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS. The whole scene of providence in favour of Esther and the Jews, is wonderful. She found favour in the eyes of the king, when she adventured into his presence, contrary to the rules of the palace. Every suit which she made was granted, till the vengeance which Haman intended for Mordecai lighted on his own head: The accomplices of Haman fell into the pit they had been digging for the Jews, to the number of seventy thousand.—Nothing could be more unjust than the destruction of the Jews, at the hands of men; but it was righteous with God to suffer them to be thus terrified, by the nations with which they had

had, at this time, mixed, and of which they had learned their way.

2. **THIS** covenant-renovation took place after God had defeated the secret plots against the Jews, and the external opposition of their enemies to the Lord's work in their hands. Hence, after the walls of the city had been completed, they had opportunity to celebrate the feast of tabernacles with greater solemnity than it had been accompanied with from the days of the Judges. The assembly which celebrated this feast was very great. **Ezrah** entertained them with reading the law; and, being assisted in this exercise by the Levites, he convinced the people that they had been a-wanting as to the due solemnities of this ordinance, in their former celebration of it. These defects they endeavoured to reform. This reading of the law commenced on the first day of the month, and they continued in it until the last day of the feast. There was great ignorance among the people, but also great desire to receive instruction: **Ezrah CAUSED THEM TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING; and they made such proficiency as enabled them, in a short time, to enter into covenant with knowledge and understanding.**

3. **THIS** transaction took place after the congregation had been brought to deep humiliation for, and solemn confession of their iniquities.

iniquities. Their exercise appears to have been improper at the first; it being probably carried to such excess as to disturb the worshipping assemblies, and to indispose them for such rejoicing as became the feast of tabernacles. But that rejoicing did not indispose them to solemn fasting, and confession of sin, when this feast was over. The feast of in-gathering followed on the eighth day after the beginning of the feast of tabernacles; and that was also finished on the twenty-second day of the month. They APPOINTED to themselves the twenty-fourth day, as a solemn fast, to confess their own iniquity, and the iniquities of their fathers; and also to renew their covenant with the Lord God of their fathers. This was a day distinct from all the ceremonial holy days, which were of divine appointment: But it is competent to the Church, in all ages, to set apart as much time as is requisite, for acknowledging their iniquity to the glory of God. Few fast-days have been observed to such purpose as this one: It was a day of distinguished light and life among the children of God.

SIXTHLY, The SOLEMN CONFIRMATIONS of this Covenant is the next branch of our subject.

1. IT was a WRITTEN Covenant: "And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it." The word COVENANT is marked,

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ed, in our translation, as a supplement; but it is strongly implied in the inspired original*. And a deed is made more permanent by writing; it stands to futurity for praise, in case of performance, and to their shame, in case of violation.

2. IT was a SEALED covenant. It was written that it might be sealed: And the covenanters actually appended their sign-manual unto, testifying their hearty approbation of its contents. Subscribing with the hand was now become an usual rite in ratification of covenants. Laws, and letters patent, were sealed with the king's seal, and contracts with the sign-manual; as appears from the instance of Jeremiah: Said he, "And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses †." This history adds light to that prediction of Isaiah's, "And another shall subscribe with the hand unto the Lord ‡."

3. IT was a SWORN covenant: "They entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law." An oath implies a curse, in case of violation; as it is an appeal unto God in the character of a judge. Though every sinner who vio-

* There are two words used in the inspired original, כרתים אמתה, the former of which denotes the cutting of a covenant; the latter a firm deed, or constitution.

† Jer. xxxii. 10, 12, 44. ‡ Is. xlv. 5.

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lates his oath may not be finally accursed, yet this sin deserves it in an eminent degree; and all who continue under this guilt shall be eternally accursed. The practice of ratifying covenants with God by solemn oath was as ancient as the days of Moses, at least.

IT is now time to subjoin a REFLECTION or two on what has been explained:

1. THE highest, as well as the lowest stations of life, may be filled to the glory of God. Courts, especially so corrupt ones as the Persian, had many things in them unfriendly to religion. Courtiers, in such circumstances, have temptations unto almost every species of iniquity; but the grace of God can break the snare, and make his children escape.

2. PERSONS of genuine zeal for the honour of God will improve such opportunities as their station affords them for the advancement of it. While they stand upon their watch-tower, they will be disposed to observe what advantages are offered, as also what dangers are threatened. And such was the anxiety of Nehemiah's heart, in this matter, that the smiles of the greatest monarch upon earth could not soothe it, while the city of his God lay in ruins.

3. GREAT apostacy among covenanters, and severe chastisements, either felt or feared,
* S f f should

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should be incentives unto solemn confession and serious repentance. Judah's sin brought him low; Nehemiah made this a ground of acknowledgment, and a reason for covenant-
renovation. Our case is greatly similar to theirs: When we were a kingdom, like them, we were far from serving God in our places and stations. Now we are servants, not to a despotic Prince, as Judah was, indeed, but to the Legislature of a neighbouring kingdom. Our land yieldeth a fund of tax for that power which God hath set over us for our sins. What is to be done in such a case? We must halt between two opinions, say some: The times are too bad for making a surrender of ourselves unto the Lord: But, said Nehemiah, in all this distress, **LET US MAKE A SURE COVENANT.**

DISSER-

DISSERTATION XV.

ON THE

TRANSFERRENCE OF COVENANTING

FROM THE

OLD TESTAMENT CHURCH TO THAT
OF THE NEW.

ISAIAH xix. 18, 21, &c.

THE practice of the Church of God, under the Old Testament, is so decisive in favour of covenanting, that there is no room to hesitate, If it was the means of reformation under that dispensation. But, under the New Testament, not a few dispute its lawfulness, as well as the expediency of attempting it. To determine this point, I shall Enquire,
—I. If the Laws, by which the Old Testament Church was bound to perform this duty, be of perpetual obligation under the New Testament.
—II. If the Spiritual nature of the better œconomy

nomy admits of such a duty; and if, considering the peculiar genius of it, especially the peculiar form in which the promises of it are administered on the part of God, we are laid under particular obligations to such a practice on our part.—III. Whether the predictions of the Old Testament prophets, concerning the New Testament Church, afford foundation for the exercise of faith in this duty in gospel days.—IV. If this duty was taught and exemplified in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. If I prove the affirmative of any of these, much more of them all, I will not hesitate to conclude, That covenanting is a duty transferred from the Old to the New Testament Church.

FIRST, I shall enquire if the LAW, by which the Old Testament Church was bound unto the performance of this duty, be of perpetual obligation in the Gospel Church. The formal reason of every duty originates in the authority of a law upon the conscience. If persons adventure upon any duty without God's prescription, they will find themselves at a loss to answer that important question, Who hath required this at your hand? The nature of the divine law determines the specific nature of those duties which are required by it: That is, positive laws enjoin positive obedience, and moral precepts moral obedience. The question before us resolves itself into this form, Was covenanting enjoined by the moral law;

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or by some positive precept under the Old Testament dispensation? To avoid ambiguity, as much as may be, on this head, it may be observed, That laws are said to be moral which take rise from the nature of God, and from that relation in which he stands unto his rational creatures, as their moral governor. These laws are to be found, as in miniature, in the ten commandments; and are more copiously explained in the writings of the prophets and apostles: But they were of force prior to the giving of the law from Sinai; and to the various hints which were given to the patriarchs. That the moral law, and that only, afforded warrant for covenanting under the Old Testament may be made out various ways.

1. **SUNDRY** precepts in that law obliged unto this duty. The first precept, for example, binds us not only to know, but also to acknowledge and avouch the only true God as our God. Now, when this avowal is social, as well as secret, it cannot imply less than public covenanting. The second precept of the decalogue enjoins us to receive, observe, keep pure and entire all such religious ordinances as God hath appointed in his word; one of which is, vowing and swearing unto the mighty God of Jacob. Once more, The third precept demands the holy and reverend use of divine truth, which is a bright character of God's name. It requires not only an oath, on pro-
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per occasions, in civil business; but also for the purpose of solemnizing our holy profession. If God deign to swear unto us; is it too much that we swear unto him? **THOU SHALT PERFORM UNTO THE LORD THINE OATHS.**

2. **THAT** it is the moral law, and that only, which obliged unto the duty of covenanting will appear, if we consider that it was a law common to both Jews and Gentiles. The latter, as well as the former, were sometimes employed in this duty. The law of nature taught them, that, as they were **OF** God, as the first cause; so it became them to be **TO** him, as their last end: And, if so, it cannot reasonably be denied, that it became them to bind themselves **TO** him. Now, as, in right, they ought; so, in fact, they did bind themselves unto God, and that with the solemnity of an oath. One of them reasons to the following purpose: “Thou art his workmanship; he hath not only made thee, but bestowed all his benefits upon thee.”—“To this God ye ought to swear, as the soldiers do to Cæsar. But they, indeed, for the sake of wages do swear, that they will, above all things, study the welfare of Cæsar; and, while you are loaded with so many, and so great benefits by God,—will you not swear unto him? Or, when you have sworn,—will ye not perform? And what should you swear? That ye will always obey his voice; that ye will never complain of him; that ye will

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will never complain of any thing he measures out unto you; that ye will always do, and suffer willingly, whatsoever he shall think necessary to put upon you*." Than which nothing can be more conclusive.

3. THERE was no other law by which this duty could be bound on the Old Testament Church than the moral law. There are only three laws supposable in this case; namely, the judicial, the ceremonial, and the moral: But as the two former, being incompetent, must be removed, the latter must be established. There is not a fourth.—The incompetence of the ceremonial law is evident from the very nature of it; it can enjoin nothing but ceremonies. Now, What is a ceremony? Is it not

* EPICTET. Lib. I. cap. xiv.—MELANCTHON argues also, from the light of nature, in favour of this duty, when answering Osiander's objections against it. Having produced the instance of covenanting in the days of Joshua, he adds, "Non adferam hic aliarum politicarum exempla, etsi notum est, in omni honesta societate aliqua esse fœdera, quibus ad certorum officiorum communicationem, homines obligati sunt, ut apud Xenophontem dicitur πανταχῷ ἐν τῇ ἑλλάδι νόμος κίῃται, τὰς πολίτας δεσύνειν ὁμοροῦσιν." The meaning of which is, in short: "I shall not adduce examples, in this place, of other states, although it is known, that there are certain COVENANTS in every lawful society, by which men are obliged to the mutual performance of certain duties, as in Xenophon; WHEREVER THE LAW OBTAINED IN GREECE, PERSONS MUST SWEAR THE OATHS OF THE STATE."—MELANCTHON Opp. Tom. III. p. 738. Orat. de Calumniis Osiandri,

something

something external; some carnal rite, by divine appointment, figuring out something spiritual. But what is signified by covenanting? If typical, what is the antitype?—The other plea is equally void, though more plausible. It has been the fashionable cant, for some time past, to suggest, that covenanting was a political duty, peculiar to the theocratical government of the Jews. To examine this point, let it be observed, that the theocratical government was confined to the state, as was covenanting to the church; and the distinction between church and state was as real, though not so visible, under the Old Testament as under the New. The view of a theocracy, above exhibited, leaves us no room to doubt in this matter. We may also appeal unto particular instances of covenanting in the Old Testament Church. In the days of Jehoiada, for example, there was at once two distinct covenants; a spiritual, or church covenant, between Jehoiada and the people; and a political, or state covenant, between the king and his subjects. Had covenanting been a political duty, the former had been wholly unnecessary; because, when the people covenanted with the king, the head of the theocracy on earth, they covenanted with God himself in him; binding themselves unto every possible political duty. Once more, the theocratical government was in great perfection under the Judges; yet it is evident, that Joshua, in the character of a prophet, brought

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brought the congregation of Israel to covenant with God in a spiritual manner: The matter of the covenant is far from being political; and the manner of executing it evidenceth, that it is truly spiritual and evangelical. — Thus it appears abundantly evident, that Israel was obliged unto the duty of covenanting by the moral law, and that ONLY. I shall not stand to prove, that this law is of perpetual obligation on the members of the New Testament Church; as I do not know if the enemies of covenanting (whatever they may do practically), have the boldness to deny it.

SECONDLY, I shall now enquire if the Spiritual Nature of the Better Oeconomy admits of such a duty as covenanting; and if, considering the peculiar genius of it, especially the particular form in which the promises administered on the part of God, we are not laid under peculiar obligations unto such a practice on our part. To set this matter in a just point of view, I shall state the nature of the Gospel Church, in respect of her privileges and constitution, as contrasted with the Old Testament Church: And then attend unto the form in which these grants were made unto her.

I. I MUST state the nature of the Gospel Church, in respect of her constitution and privileges, as these are contrasted with the Old

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Testament Church; and that both in respect of her visible and invisible state.

I. THIS Church was erected on the foundation of Christ's resurrection; for the ministry of the Baptist, the personal ministry of Christ, as well as of the seventy disciples, belonged, properly, unto the church of the circumcision: Though it may be granted, that they were solemn preludes of the better œconomy. The personal ministry of Christ had gathered together a considerable number of disciples, considerably more, probably, than five hundred: And, as they continued in the world after Christ's ascension, so he made provision for them, commissioning pastors to make known unto them all things whatsoever he had commanded. These instructions are expressly mentioned by Luke: "Being seen of them forty days, and speaking of things pertaining to the kingdom of God." And their commission, empowering them to act according to these instructions, is registered by another Evangelist: Says Christ, by Matthew, "All power is given me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." Said Mark, "Go preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This
commission

commission was accompanied with power equal to the execution of it, even the power of the Holy Ghost.

2. THESE officers were authorized to exhibit various privileges and immunities, both respecting individuals and the society itself, for encouraging persons to enter into it: They also enjoined various duties on such persons as accepted of these privileges. The privileges, unto which the servants of Christ invited sinners, were nearly connected with the duties they enjoined upon them.—As Christ instituted a gospel ministry, both ordinary and extraordinary; so he enjoined subjection unto them, as far as they act according to their commission. The gospel ministry was bestowed on this society under the notion of a gift: “Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and GAVE GIFTS unto men. And he GAVE some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.” The office of the Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists was extraordinary: The office of the pastor is to continue in the church until the end of the world. Now, as they are given for the edification of the body of Christ, so the persons who profess to belong unto this body are enjoined to “obey them who have the rule over them.”—As the great Prophet of the Church has given unto us the doctrine of his holy word;

so he requires us to receive it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God. It was one of the distinguishing privileges of the Jewish Church, that unto them were committed the oracles of God: The oracles of the Gospel Church are greatly enlarged beyond these of the Jewish.—As the sole Legislator of the Church has been pleased to institute such ordinances in her as are requisite for the celebration of divine worship, so he has also enjoined the celebration of them. The ordinances of his appointment are, the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word, prayer, and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the dispensation and receiving of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Church-government and discipline; the ministry; maintenance of religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him. We cannot attempt a delineation of each of these ordinances; but refer unto the Directory for Worship, subjoined to the Westminster Confession of Faith.—With respect unto the immunities which are offered to individuals, they are much the same as the Old Testament Church enjoyed in kind, though greatly superior to them in degree. If we take a comparative view of them, we will find a striking resemblance. Did the gospel œconomy contain a promise of the Holy Ghost? so also did that of the Old Testament. Did Jesus Christ authorize his servants to proclaim pardon, and complete

complete acceptance through his righteousness? so also were the prophets of the Old Testament Church. Did the Son of God offer the privilege of sonship to the members of the New Testament Church? Old Testament saints were also admitted into the family of God. Did the Head of the Church offer sanctification to all his members, in gospel time? so did he also under the first testament. If Christ assures the children of his family of keeping grace, under the New Testament? he also kept them, as in a fortified city, under the Old Testament. Does he assure them of support under trials after his ascension? he likewise upheld them, by the right hand of his righteousness, prior unto that event. Does he bring life and immortality to light by the gospel, assuring his followers of the eternal inheritance? he likewise persuaded the Old Testament saints, THAT HE PREPARED FOR THEM A CITY,—A CITY, WHOSE BUILDER AND MAKER IS GOD.—The duties enjoined on individuals are, an observance of all things whatsoever he hath commanded.

3. THERE was a notable change in the creed which the Apostles proposed to the members of the Gospel Church, from that which was received in the Old Testament Church. The centre of the Old Testament faith was, "THE MESSIAH TO COME:" The centre of the New Testament faith, "THE MESSIAH ALREADY

ALREADY COME. The Old Testament Church was called to believe all those prophecies which foretold the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ: The New Testament Church, to believe the full accomplishment of these promises in the Son of God. The Old Testament Church was bound to believe, that God would accomplish both the condition and the promises of the New Covenant in his time: The New Testament Church, that the condition of it is already accomplished, in the righteousness and death of Jesus of Nazareth; that he hath accomplished such promises as respected Christ personal, and will accomplish those which respect Christ mystical in his own season.

4. THERE is also a notable change as to the worship and ordinances which are celebrated in the Gospel Church, from what were observed under the Old Testament.—The place of solemn worship is no longer one, as under the Old Testament. Said God, by Moses, “But UNTO THE PLACE which the Lord your God shall choose, out of all your tribes, to put his name there; even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come.” Accordingly, God pitched first upon Shiloh, and then upon Jerusalem. But, under the better œconomy, no one place is more holy than another: “Believe me (said Christ) the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.”—

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The PERSONS authorised to administer gospel ordinances are no longer taken from one tribe or family. The tribe of Levi and family of Aaron were the sole ministers of the sanctuary, after the giving of the Law ; but Jesus chose his Apostles from any tribe he pleased ; and gave infallible direction for ordaining Gentiles themselves unto the sacred function of the ministry. With respect to the Priesthood, in the strict sense of the word, we have no other, under the better œconomy, than Jesus Christ, the High-priest of our profession : As to the metaphorical priesthood, this honour have all his saints, being made kings and priests unto God, and his Father.—The Law itself, even the ceremonial law, is likewise abolished. This follows of course upon the change of the priesthood, according to the apostolic reasoning on this subject : “ For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity also a change of the law.” The law intended must be the law of commandments, contained in ordinances. This he did for incorporating the Gentiles, along with the Jews, into the Abrahamic covenant. “ Having abolished, in his flesh, the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man ; so making peace : And that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” This law was a shadow of good things to come ; and, when these good things themselves

themselves were actually come, the shadow of them became unnecessary. This law comprehended sacrifices, with all their appendages: Now, it was foretold of the Messiah, that he should make the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, at the same time when he finished transgression and made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Nor is there any one thing in which the Apostles are more explicit, than in rescinding the Jewish holy-days (all except one whole day in seven, which they, by their practice, determined to be the first day of the week): "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whercunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." To another church, said the same Apostle, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the Sabbaths, which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ."——The sacraments, by which the Covenant was ratified in the Old Testament Church, are also changed under the Gospel œconomy. Circumcision was continued in the Old Testament Church, as it was a bloody ordinance, and bespoke the necessity of shedding the blood of Christ, unto the remission of sin: But that which rendered it fit for that dispensation rendered it unfit for this: The fountain of Christ's blood being now opened. As circumcision is

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now null in fact, so also of right; for, as the Synod of Jerusalem determined, Gentiles are exempted from the observation of it: And, by the time Paul wrote to the Hebrews, Jews were exempted likewise. The legal teachers of that age made the observance of circumcision a part of their justifying righteousness: But, said the Apostle, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, That, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing: For I testify again unto every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law." But it is inconsistent with the goodness of God, and the pastoral care of our Lord Jesus Christ, to imagine that he removed a privilege from the Church, without substituting an equivalent in the place of it: But there is no room for such an impeachment, as baptism takes the same place, under the Gospel œconomy, which circumcision held in the Old Testament Church. Hence, the promise sealed by circumcision is now sealed by baptism: Said Peter, "Be baptized every one of you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the promise is unto you, and unto your children." Now, this is exactly correspondent unto God's declaration respecting circumcision: "Thou shalt keep my covenant THEREFORE, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations: This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee, Every man-child among you shall be circumcised."—As to the sacrament of

the Lord's Supper, the Apostle declares, that it takes the place of the passover, in the Gospel Church, in like manner: "For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast;" namely, the Gospel feast. These Old Testament ordinances were abolished, of right, at the resurrection of Christ; but, as it took some time to wean his ancient people from those things which once bore the stamp of his institution, he exercised his sovereignty, in putting them off by degrees, until the destruction of Jerusalem; by which they were also abolished in fact.—The lawgiver, as well as the sceptre, are also now removed from Judah. The sceptre departed from the tribe of Judah and house of David, in the Babylonish captivity; and the lawgiver, or Sanhedrim, in the destruction of Jerusalem: And with the latter, the instrument of government in the theocratical state, even the judicial law, as far as it was peculiar to the Jewish nation,

5. THERE was, in consequence of these things, a most favourable change as to the internal state of the Church, which likewise commenced at the resurrection of Christ. The New Testament Church excels the Old, in respect of the gracious communications of the Holy Ghost; Such as, light inward and subjective, corresponding to those superior measures of external revelation which are bestowed upon her in the books of the New Testament;

Testament: "We all, with open face, (without the apparatus of typical glassess, or miniature drawings) behold the glory of the Lord, that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."—The Gospel Church is likewise endued with superior measures of life and vigour. The Old Testament is styled the ministration of death; but this œconomy is eminently the DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT; and the Spirit giveth life. We are not to imagine, that the former dispensation is denominated the ministration of death, as if all had been doomed to death who died under it; for it was the means of bringing many unto the full enjoyment of eternal life. Neither is it so called, as if it had denounced nothing but death; for it presented LIFE as well as DEATH,—the BLESSING as well as the CURSE, unto those who enjoyed the institutions of it.—But it bears the designation of the MINISTRATION OF DEATH, as death was threatened in that part of it which exhibited the Covenant of Works, in its penalty and curse: The Covenant of Works (which, for Gospel ends, was exhibited in that dispensation) being greatly predominant in it. It bore this name also, as there were but sparing communications of the Holy Ghost, as a spirit of life in that dispensation. This was one cause of much deadness and languor among the worshippers. On the other hand, the power of Christ's resurrection is more

abundantly felt since he rose from the dead: He has verified his promise, "Because I live, ye shall live also."—The liberty of the Gospel Church is also greatly enlarged beyond that of the former œconomy. Fear and bondage abounded under it; but liberty and confidence in this. Though there was a promise of payment of their debt, by the surety; yet, as it was not actually made, so there was an intimation of the debt-bond in the Law, which could not but strike the conscience with terror: But now the bond is taken up, and actually cancelled by the death of Christ. Instead of thunders from Sinai, we have an invitation from Zion, to draw near, with true hearts, in the full assurance of faith. There is an internal liberty of soul, corresponding to the external liberty from the ceremonial law, which consists in more clear and distinct views of the regenerating and justifying grace of God, revealed in the promises of the New Covenant. We find, indeed, many exalted instances of freedom in access, under the former œconomy, on special occasions; but, for the greater part, they were shut up in bondage, compared with the more glorious liberty of the children of God.—The Gospel Church is also favoured with more exalted measures of holiness and sanctification, as he gives more full and exact views of the standard of it in the person and law of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. THE peculiar Form of these divine grants demands our attention in the next place ; and the Apostles, as well as the prophets, give us to understand, that they were given in the form of a COVENANT : Said God, by Jeremiah, “ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt ; which covenant of mine they broke, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord : But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more*.” And, lest we should have mistaken the meaning of this oracle, the inspired Apostle expressly applies it unto the Gospel œconomy : “ For, if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second : For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the

* Jer. xxxi. 31—34.

days come (saith the Lord) when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord: For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest: For I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old*." I shall not, at this time, attempt a vindication of the Apostle's manner of quotation; this province has been already occupied by others. I shall enquire, by the way, however, In what respects this covenant is not ACCORDING to the Sinai Covenant. To me it appears, That this new covenant was not ACCORDING to that transaction in respect of **TERROR**, and in respect of **TYPES**. It ought never to be forgotten, that the Apostle is reasoning a-

* Heb. viii. 7—13.

gainst the use of Jewish rites; and he avers, that this new covenant is NOT ACCORDING to the old covenant, as the old covenant had ORDINANCES OF DIVINE SERVICE; and a WORLDLY SANCTUARY, with an immense quantity of splendid utensils belonging to it. But these, having waxed old, are now evanished. It is not the Old Testament, then, in respect of its internal and essential privileges; but in respect of these ordinances which are superseded under the New Testament.

BUT our attention must be chiefly directed unto the peculiar form of those divine grants which are made by God unto the Gospel Church: And he gave them in the form of a COVENANT. A fœderal administration has, in sovereign wisdom, been deemed suitable to the glory of God, and the good of his people in every age. I have already offered various remarks on the term, in the introduction. It is of small importance whether we render it TESTAMENT OR COVENANT, though the latter appears to be the best translation in this connection: All God's dealings with men being by way of covenant; and his dealings with sinful men being in the way of gracious covenant, proceeding on the foot of the eternal contract between the Father and the Son. This gracious dealing with sinful men is often styled his MAKING, OR CUTTING A COVENANT; denoting such a covenant as is competent for a God
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of grace to make with such persons as are sinners by nature, and saved by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. In all fœderal transactions between God and his people, since the fall, there is first a divine grant, on the part of God; and then a ready acceptance of that grant, followed with a dutiful restipulation, on the part of his people; which are either expressed or necessarily implied. The duties restipulated are by no means the antecedent condition of those grants which God confers on his Church; but the consequences of them. These grants were sometimes bestowed at the time when God took his people into covenant with himself: At other times, they were registered, that they might be of use in succeeding periods; this grant is of the latter kind. As God intended to complete the canon of the New Testament very soon after the introduction of the Gospel œconomy; so he bestowed such privileges upon the New Testament Church, by this covenant, as should be adapted to her necessities in every age. The form of them is also registered, as a standing warrant for our approaching unto God by covenanting, in the most solemn forms. It had been presumption, in the highest degree, for men to propose the making of a covenant with God, had not he first proposed to make a covenant with us. But this divine proposal, bearing this gracious form, affords foundation for faith, and lays us under indispensable ties of gratitude to put
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hand to this duty. Is any person disposed to enter into covenant with God? Here is a divine proposal ready to be accepted: Is there any society, in their ecclesiastical capacity, disposed to covenant with the living God? Here is a divine proposal ready to be accepted by them, in like manner;—a proposal adapted to their social capacity, be they many or few. This covenant not only addresseth individuals, but also a PEOPLE: “I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people.” Such is the peculiar genius of the New Testament œconomy! May we not conclude, that it is ignorance of the Gospel œconomy, or inattention to it, which makes persons imagine it incongruous with public covenanting?

THIRDLY, I shall next enquire if the predictions of the Old Testament Prophets, concerning the New Testament Church, lay a foundation for the exercise of faith in this duty. Could it be proved, that these prophets foretold this practice, then we may conclude not only the lawfulness, but also the certainty of its performance. That the argument from this topic may conclude with force, it is requisite to shew, that the prophecies adduced refer unto the New Testament; and could not be accomplished under the first Testament.—That they intend social covenanting, and cannot be explained of any other duty whatever.

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The first instance produced, at this time, is that remarkable prediction of Isaiah: "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation: Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it *." The Holy Ghost puts various distinguishing characters upon the season of the accomplishment of this prediction, by which it may be fully known;—characters sufficiently marking the Gospel œconomy: **IN THAT DAY**, that important day, when the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord: This can be no other than the day of Gospel light. Though Egypt was the first of the nations who cultivated the sciences, and, on this account, might be styled an enlightened nation; yet she was as stupid as the blindest, and came behind the greatest Barbarian, with respect to a Deity. The Lord was not known unto Egypt until the ministry of the Apostles stretched out the **LINE** of revelation on all the earth, and carried the **WORD OF LIFE** unto the world's end.—This prediction refers also unto a time when Egypt is delivered from the curse, and interested in the blessing along with Israel:—When Israel, according to the

* **Is.** xix. 18, and 21.

flesh, is no longer God's peculiar people, to the exclusion of others; but God himself pronounceth them BLESSED, saying, "BLESSED be Egypt MY PEOPLE, and Assyria the work of my hands," as well as "Israel mine inheritance." God never afforded such a favour unto any people but Israel, under the ancient œconomy. The privilege of being God's people does not only import, that there might be some proselytes taken from that nation, or some strangers sojourning among them belonging to that description; but it imports, that, as a people, or in their social capacity, he should own his relation to them; and they should avow their relation to him. As to the Gospel œconomy, God himself declares the sign of its introduction is, "I will call them MY PEOPLE which were not my people; and her BELOVED who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God."—In the next place, The substance of this promise cannot be exhausted by any other duty than solemn covenanting. The terms are too explicate, and the description too graphical, to admit of any other application whatsoever. The first description of this duty is expressed to the following purpose: "And shall SWEAR to the Lord of hosts*." They

* Is. xix. 18.

shall not only swear by the Lord of hosts, as in civil matters; but TO HIM, as the grand party unto whom they surrender themselves in this solemn act. The phrase is remarkable, and seems to be peculiarly used by inspired writers, for marking the party unto whom persons engaged when they ratified covenants with an oath *. The next description of the duty intended in this promise is, "They shall vow a vow unto the Lord and perform it." Ceremonial vows were never the vow of a people; but an individual vowed to dedicate part of his substance unto the Lord: This is a social vow,—
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* Some explain this oracle of SWEARING BY GOD, and understand it as put for the whole of divine worship; but with no degree of probability. The original phrase is ליהוה. Now, we will find the particle ל constantly marking the person sworn unto, as in Gen. xxi. 23. and xxv. 33. While the person invoked, in swearing, is always marked with the prefix ב. Nor can any instance be given, in which he is marked with ל. Buxtorff. The-saur. Gram. observes, THAT IT GOVERNS EITHER THE GENITIVE OR DATIVE. The latter most frequently, the former very rarely; and it is the Dative strictly taken, not as used for the Accusative or Ablative. See Wasmuth. Gram. Heb. p. 63. edit. Lipsiæ HENRICO OPITIO, A. D. 1714. I find, indeed, that some object Zeph. i. 5. as an instance in which ל marks the object of worship: But Drusus, in Loc. justly observes, that this objection originates in mistranslation: "Omnes quos quidem viderim, interpretes hic legunt, QUI JURANT PER DOMINUM: meo judicio non recte. Nam jurare per Dominum ביהוה. Hic autem legitur in Ebreo ליהוה, quod nos primi vertimus DOMINO. Jurare Domino quid sit discēs ex 2 Par. xv. 14. Est autem Jurejurando interposito nomen dari pietati, et quasi Deo se addicere et con-
secrare."

the vow of a people, "They shall," &c. And social vowing is the very thing for which we plead, even such a vow as is ratified with an oath. Some affect to deny that ever vows were, or should be confirmed by an oath; but, to me, it is plain, that the swearing mentioned in a foregoing verse is for confirming the species of the vow under consideration. The Holy Ghost also points us unto another vow, to be afterwards considered, which was ratified with an oath. The antitypical David, not only **VOWED**, but likewise **SWARE** unto the mighty God of Jacob,

secrare." In support of this observation, we may add the following examples, Gen. xxi. 23. ch. xxii. 16. ch. xxiv. 3. If. lxv. 23. ch. lxii. 8. ch. lxv. 16. Vid. NOLDII, Concor. No. 708. TYMPIUS adds the following observation, in a note on If. lxii. 8. "Juravit Jehova PER dextram suam, et per brachium roboris sui." Juravit (juramentum) in dextra suam (conversus); in cuius virtute id executionis ratione fundatum, quæ præstare sanctum possit. Quo sensu etiam constructum nomen sumitur Exod. xxii. 10. &c. Objectum itaque juramenti constituit, quoties Latini præpos: PER ei præmittunt." And, although Noldius follows some of the ordinary translations in their mistake, in his Concordance, yet he distinguisheth between כ and ה in his Annot. "Aliud autem est jurare כ, If. xix. 18. Zeph. i. 5. Ps. cxxxii. 2. 2 Par. xv. 13. Nam qui jurat per Jehovam Deum testem invocat; sed qui jurat Jehovæ cultum stipulatur. Vid. Drusii. Obs. Lib. IX. cap. x. Quod Latine jurare Dominum aut per Dominum id Hebraice dicitur BADO-NAI cum BETH: ex quo illud Apoc. x. 6. i. e. Juravit per eum qui vivit in secula seculum. Interdum autem reperitur Ladonai cum ה, sed alio sensu: tum enim valet JURARE DOMINO; ut quantum inter eum cui juramus, et eum per quem juramus interest, tantum inter hæc duo inter-

Jacob. Hence, we may conclude, that to deny, That a vow can be confirmed with an oath is nugatory and vain. In these two instances, the vow is the thing ratified, and the oath the solemnity with which it is confirmed. **SWEARING** unto the Lord of hosts, then, must be taken literally: Some contend, indeed, that it is metaphorical; others that it is ceremonial: But what is metaphorical swearing, pray? Swearing must be swearing without a figure, after all that can be said about it. If ceremonial, like other ceremonies, it must have a substance; for a shadow without a substance,—a type without an antitype, is a solecism in the grossest degree. The fulfilment of this prediction shall be considered in Dissertation XVII.

ANOTHER prediction of the same prophet runs in the following terms: “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth

interesse videtur. Si fas esset in re tam levi anderem, vivit DOMINUS differentiam hanc perpetuam esse; insciteque interpretes eam confundere, Sop. i. 5. cum verunt. Qui jurant per Dominum; quod scriptum in Hebræo LADONAI, i. e. Domino ut in Ps. cxxxii 2. Quæ juravit Domino vovit forti Jacob: et Is. xix. 18. In die illo, &c. Quid autem sit jurare Domino discas ex 2 Par. xv. 14. Porro in verbis Soph. hæc sententia continetur, Qui jurati sunt Domino, h. e. qui sancte ac quasi Deo recte pollicite sunt se in fide pietate,, federe mansuros cum Domino, violant quod polliciti sunt JURANDO PER REGEM SUUM. Sive, ut alii malunt, PER DEUM SUUM MOLOCH. See Class. Gram. Sac. Lib. IV. Tract. i. Obf. 5. p. 679.

in

in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed."

THE whole paragraph is evidently addressed to the Gospel Church: Gentile sinners are evidently intended by **THE ENDS OF THE EARTH**; for the phrase is especially descriptive of them, and peculiar unto them. So it is used by the inspired writers: "**ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH** have seen the salvation of our God *." Again, "Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession †." The same phrase is used by Isaiah as well as David: "And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to **THE ENDS OF THE EARTH** ‡." To add no more, Said God, by Isaiah, "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations: and **ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH** shall see the salvation of our God §." And the same persons are designed **EVERY KNEE**, and **EVERY TONGUE**, in the text above quoted.

* Psal. xcvi. 3. † Psal. ii. 8. ‡ Is. xlix. 6. § Is. lii. 10.

Now,

Now, it is plain, as a sun-beam, that Gentile sinners are not called to look unto the Lord for righteousness prior unto the fulness of time.

AGAIN, The substance of this promise cannot be exhausted in any other duty than solemn covenanting. The expression is plain in itself; but not a few endeavour to obscure it as much as may be. As Paul has applied this prediction to the last judgment *, they aver, That it ought to be confined unto it. This hypothesis, however, is not established on any sure base; for the Apostle quotes it oftener than once, and applies it, once at least, to CONFESSION of the Lordship which belongs unto Jesus Christ, as well as unto the CONVICTION and SUBMISSION of all creatures at a judgment-seat. It is, according to the apostolic exposition, a swearing to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father. The celebrated HERVEY translates the whole thus: "By myself have I sworn: the

* The places in which this text is quoted by Paul are, Rom. xiv. 11. and Philip. ii. 10. 11. From which places compared it is plain, that this prediction is of large signification, and may justly be applied to more events than one. It is, as if the Prophet had said, "Every tongue shall either confess unto the Son of God, and that with the solemnity of an oath, That he is made of God unto them righteousness and strength; That they owe unlimited obedience unto him as their highest Lord: Or they shall have such a confession extorted from them against a judgment-day."

word.

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word of righteousness goeth out of my mouth; the word shall not return. To me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear, saying, Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength:" And then, after he has vindicated it by just criticism, he adds, "This, then, shall be the form of your oath,—Such the tenor of your confession*." The manner in which this oracle is given out is also a good argument in favour of explicit covenanting. God not only promiseth, but also ratifieth his promise with his oath: Now, if God swear to us, Is it too much that we should swear unto him? Is not his example worthy of our imitation? Are we not bound, by every tie of gratitude, to make the swearing reciprocal? The time in which this prediction shall receive its accomplishment has been variously represented. I humbly judge it is yet to come, at least in the fullest emphasis of it; although I readily grant it has already received a partial accomplishment. Bullenger judiciously applies it unto the time of the in-bringing of the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentile nations†: Nor have I seen an application of it so natural and easy.

THE third prediction I shall adduce, is delivered in the following terms: "I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods upon

* HERVEY'S *Aspasio Vindicated*, p. 68, 69.

† BULLENGER in *Loc.*

the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring.—One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord; and surname himself by the name of Israel*." There are various things in this prediction which point out the New Testament œconomy as the æra of its accomplishment; such as the promise of pouring out the Spirit upon the seed of Christ. Dr Owen justly observes, That the Spirit is never said to be **POURED** out on the
the

* If. xlv. 3, 5. VITRINGA opens this precious treasure with the key of solid criticism, in his commentary on this text. The whole is well worthy of our perusal; but too copious to be transcribed. I shall adduce the following excerpts as a specimen: "קרא, VOCABIT, idem hic valet quod קרא, VOCABITUR. Sic cap. xliii. 7. et xlviii. 1. Sed ipsum nostrum קרא formæ activæ cum voce בוש constructum eadem sensu sumitur apud Moysen Gen. iv. 26. TUM COEPTUM EST APPELLARI DE NOMINE JEHOVÆ, Que versio hoc tempore doctis interpretibus merito probatur, h. e. dici cœperunt Filii Dei.—Se appellare nomine Jacobi mystice est: α. Profiteri fidem Jacobi, ejusque cultum religionis sectari atque exercere, et adspirare ad justiam Dei per fidem. β. In promissione gratiæ spiritualibus, summam salutis, felicitatis sue constituere. γ. Virtutes Jacobi, INTEGRITATIS, MODESTIÆ, PATIENTIÆ, PLACIDITATIS INDOLIS, ET VERÆ DEI REVERENTIÆ imitari ac præstare. Qui hunc induit animi affectum, vitamque et mores ad eum modum componit, verus est JACOBIDA. Sic Poeta sacer. Psal. xxiv. 5, 6. "Quis conscendet Montem Jehovah? Purus manibus, et purus corde, qui non attollit in vanum animum suum (non sectatur falsam justitiam) et non jurat fraudulenter
(in

the Old Testament Church; as he was given unto them in a more sparing measure than under the better œconomy. This prediction must also belong unto the Gospel Church, as it refers unto a time when the belief of the true God should triumph over the polytheism and idolatry of the Gentile world: This is insisted on in the following part of the chapter. Now, it was the Gospel dispensation alone, that dispelled the thick clouds of Pagan darkness, and

(in negotio religionis): Is reportabit Benedictionem a Jehovah, (h. e. Benedictionem omnium prestantissimum, quæ est JUSTITIA, ut mox sequitur) et justitiam a Deo salutis suæ. Hæc est generatio quærentium te: sedulo quærentium faciem tuam. Hic est Jacob." Hi sunt verum semen Jacobi. Hæc simplex est positio. Gradatio in sequentibus. "Hic scribat," &c. Hoc est manu sua SIGNABIT: quod aliquanto plus est quam DICET. Phrasis desumpta est a contractibus, qui in tabulas redacti subscriptione manuum confirmabantur, tum ab his qui contraxerant, tum a testibus; de quo ritu luculentus locus est apud Jer. xxxii. 10, 12, 44.—Ultimum est quod hic redditur: "Et nomine Israelis cognominabitur." h. e. Appellabitur non ISRAEL, sed ISRAELITA. Quæro quid plus dicat hoc nomen quam illud Jacobi Respondeo, tanto plus, quanto pluris valet nomen ISRAEL quam JACOB. Israel notat Luctatorem cum Deo, &c. Designantur itaque hoc nomine confessores et martyres, qui non gravantur causa fidei subire gravissimas tentationes, et afflictiones, et vi fidei cum Jacobo vincunt. Et hæc quidem quo ad confessionem ipsam. Subjecta quibus Vates hoc attributum vindicat designat. Ille vocula הִנֵּה HIC, ter quidem expressa, sed potestate quater repetita, Psal. lxxxvii. 3. &c. Memorabo Raab (Egypt) et Babylon inter eos qui me familiariter cognoscunt. Ecce Palæstina et Tyrus cum Arabibus Cuschæis: HIC natus ibi. Et de

and diffused the knowledge of the living and true God through the Gentile world.

THE things promised are such as cannot comport with any other duty than that of solemn covenanting. A variety of things are specified; as SOLEMN DEDICATIONS: "One shall say, I am the Lord's." This is a phrase frequently used of FOEDERAL DEDICATION, whether social or secret. When Israel covenanted, they engaged to be the Lord's people.

Zione prædicabitur. HIC insignis vir natus est in ea Jehova recentebit in celsu populorum. HIC natus est in ea. Vidimus hanc emphasin voculæ *נח*. HIC cap. xxv. 9. confer. Psal. xxiv. 6. 8. 10." Two writers of this age suppose, that, on our exposition of this place, the covenanters should call themselves John Jacob, and James Israel; and here they make excellent sport,—it were a pity to spoil it, as it adds much to their happiness. I recollect to have heard, that, when one laughs, he must either laugh at the folly of others, or at his own. The laughter of these two gentlemen is certainly of the latter kind:—The object of their derision is their own ignorance. They seem not to have adverted, that the surnames they refer to are of very modern invention: The surnames the prophet alludes to are such as obtained in most parts of the world in ancient times. And Vitringer remarks, that these surnames were of two kinds: "Vel enim sunt hæreditaria familiæ quæ licet olim certis de rationibus, personi illustribus imposita tandem in nomina familiæ verterunt, ut apud Romanos nomina MAXIMI CRASSI, &c. Vel notant *επιθετικὰ* hominibus singularibus impositam, per quam describuntur ab eorum ingenio, fortuna habitu corporis, ut Crassus apud Romanos Dives; Cajus CALIGULA; Q. Labienus PARTHICUS cognominatus est." &c.

—Again,

—Again, This prediction secures SPECIAL DESIGNATION: “And another shall call himself by the name of Jacob.” In almost all ages of the world, when persons took up a peculiar profession, they also assumed a designation corresponding to it: For example, when the antediluvian saints separated from the wicked brood of Cain, they took to themselves the designation of the SONS OF GOD; and their solemn avowal of that name is expressed in terms similar to those before us: In the time in which this oracle was written, strangers who were admitted into the Church, were also incorporated with the seed of Jacob, and styled Israelites: In like manner, the genuine members of the Gospel Church bear the designation of THE ISRAEL OF GOD, even by an inspired Apostle. When persons, then, call themselves by THE NAME OF JACOB, they profess to be Israelites indeed, in whose hearts there is no guile. Thus their conduct is amplified: “And surname himself by the name of Israel.”

—The last thing proposed is equally explicit: It is FOEDERAL SUBSCRIPTION: “Another shall subscribe with the hand unto the Lord.” This foederal act we have considered above.

THE fulfilment of this prediction obtained, in part, in the early periods of the Christian Church; in the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost, and the blessed consequences of it; but

it must by no means be confined unto them. As the gift of the Holy Ghost belongs unto every age and period of the Gospel œconomy; so, whenever he is bestowed, this pleasant fruit may be expected. Isaiah is not the only prophet, however, who predicted this exercise in the Gospel Church; Jeremiah coincides exactly with him in this matter: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, The children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going, and weeping, they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us join ourselves unto the Lord in a perpetual covenant never to be forgotten*." We may observe, 'The season assigned for the accomplishment of this prediction: It is a time when the children of Israel and the children of Judah shall be incorporated in one church-state. An event which the Apostle pronounced to be future in his time; and we may venture to affirm, that it has not taken place between his day and ours. The prophet speaks of this season as a very remarkable time: "In those days, and at that time." The phrase may import any notable day indeed; but most frequently it imports the Gospel day.—The things predicted to be in that day are, deep Humiliation, genuine Reformation, and solemn Federal Transaction.

* Jer. l. 4.

These things go usually hand in hand. The liberal translation is, "They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, they shall come, and join themselves unto Jehovah; the everlasting covenant shall not be forgotten*." The duty mentioned is, JOINING themselves unto the Lord: The union is fœderal; and it consists in taking hold of the everlasting covenant. All God's children are JOINED UNTO THE LORD by the Holy Ghost; but this union is secret and invisible, and every one is joined by himself: But the union specified in the oracle is public and social; an union unto which persons may be encouraged by the example of others. The prophet Zechariah makes also a parallel declaration: "And many nations shall be JOINED to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people†." The term is frequently expressive of entering into a sacred bond, as where it is said: "Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself unto the Lord, speak, saying," &c. "Also the sons of the stranger, THAT JOIN themselves unto the Lord," &c. "AND TAKETH HOLD OF MY COVENANT‡." Sometimes it denotes a civil league, indeed; but in the places quoted, the connection fixeth the sense to a sacred bond, so that it cannot be understood of any thing else. The effects of this

* Vid. Boston. Tractat. Stigmolog. p. 169.

† Zech. ii. 11.

‡ Is. lvi. 3, 6.

junction is their **BEING GOD'S PEOPLE**. Now, is not this the substance of the **New Covenant**? This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be unto me a people."

FOURTHLY, I shall next enquire if **Covenanting** was **Taught and Exemplified** in the **Life and Doctrine** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**.

1. **JESUS CHRIST** covenanted with the **Father** in the eternal council, and made a most solemn vow unto him: "Lord, remember **David**, and all his afflictions, How he swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of **Jacob***." The scope of the **Psalms** evidently leads us unto the **Messiah**. Some things in it may belong, indeed, unto **David** the type; but the greater part of it cannot be applied, in its fullest import, unto any but him who is both **David's Son** and **David's Lord**: Hence, the covenant, celebrated in it, cannot be understood of any other but of that which was made with him†.

2. **THE** law which our **Redeemer** engaged to fulfil is the **Law of Works**:—**The Law** as a broken covenant. And this law he magnified and made honourable.

* **Psal.** cxxxii. 1, 2.

† **Vid.** **Her. Wiclum de Oeconom. Fæder. Lib. H.**

3. **THOUGH** Christ's obedience was given to the Law in the form of a covenant of works; yet it is a pattern of holiness unto the members of the Gospel Church. That particular **SCHEMIS** of his obedience is not for our imitation indeed; for no one of his people are bound to purchase life by their works. But this can by no means preclude it from being exemplary as to its substance.

4. **THAT** special act of obedience; namely, **VOWING** to God—covenanting with him, is for our imitation. If the fulfilment of his vow, which consisted in an uninterrupted series of universal obedience, be for our imitation, as is confessedly the fact? Why may not the making of his engagement be for our imitation likewise? His own example adds peculiar force unto the precept, **Vow** and **PAY** unto the Lord your God. Besides the vow under which the Redeemer came in his undertaking, he vowed twice unto God in his humbled state; once at his baptism, and again at the first sacramental supper. Now, as a participation of these sacraments by Christ implied in it a profession of his faith in all those promises which the Father made to him in the eternal covenant, on the one hand; so likewise a professed subjection unto all those laws which the Father laid upon him, on the other*.

Thus

* On Christ's partaking of the sacrament, I hope the learned reader will find satisfaction, by consulting F.

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GOMARUS

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Thus, tho' his partaking of these sacraments had something in them peculiar unto himself as mediator; yet they are also patterns demanding our imitation: Hence, we may conclude, Though his vowing and swearing to the Father had in them something peculiar to his mediatorial character, yet they are exemplary likewise; and this part of his conduct calls us to tread in his steps.

5. THE doctrine of Christ, as well as his practice, lays a good foundation for solemn covenanting under the Gospel œconomy.—As he enforced obedience unto the whole, and every precept of the moral law; and this duty is enjoined by the three first precepts of it *. —As he enforced such parts of the moral law as enjoined this duty in particular: “Again, ye have heard it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself; but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths†.” The scope of his sermon on the mount is, to explain and enforce the moral law, and vindicate it from the false glosses of the Pharisees.

GOMARUS on Matth. iii. 13. The substance of his dissertation is summed up in the following terms: “Ea autem est fœderis cum Deo, et communionis Ecclesiæ significatio et obsignatio. Quod, viz. Deus fuerit ejus Deus:—ipse vero ad perpetuam obedientiæ gratitudinem, ei præstandum; obstrictus et Ecclesiæ communione adjunctus.” These are the reasons for Christ's being baptized.

* Matth. v. 16, 17.

† Matth. v. 33..

The sixth and seventh precepts of it are quoted in as many words *; and the third, as to its scope and import, in the words above cited. To ascertain the meaning of this precept, I might shew, from whence it is taken.—What culpable expositions of it were rejected by Christ.—And what he declared to be the genuine import of it. As to the first, I find authors remarkably divided, some referring us to one place of the Old Testament, some to another; and others to the Jewish traditions. They judge best who consider it as respecting more places than one; such as, “Ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God †.” And, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain ‡.” To which may be added, “Vow and pay unto the Lord thy God §.” The sense of all which texts is summed

* Matth. v. 21, 27. † Levit. xix. 12. ‡ Exod. xx. 7.

§ Psal. lxxvi. 11. The Dutch translators, after Beza, mention the two first of these, To shew, that Christ refers to the Old Testament, and not any tradition, saying; It may be observed, That it was the Law of Moses, and not any traditionary system, that Christ meant to explain: And this declaration, as well as the sixth and seventh commandment, is what had been said to the Fathers by God; and not what had been said by them, as our translation has it. “That τοῖς ἀρχαίοις is here to be rendered in the Dative, may be concluded, 1. From the words, I SAY UNTO YOU, where *ἐμὴν* is undoubtedly in the Dative case. 2. Because the word *ἐπί* is always joined to this case, so Rom. ix. 12, 26. Gal. iii. 16. Rev.

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summed up in the words formerly quoted.—
 With respect unto the culpable expositions of this precept, which were rejected by Christ, we may observe, that there were two parts of their conduct which merited reprehension in this matter: Christ taxed them for swearing by creatures; such as, by heaven and Jerusalem, &c. by the temple and the altar, &c. and that in matters of justice and importance; as well as in their ordinary conversation. In the next place, He taxed their mental reservation in these oaths; they imagined, as they had sworn only by creatures, so they were not bound by their oaths if the name of God had not been invoked: But he gave them to know, that it was absolutely unlawful to ratify their oaths and vows, in swearing by any but the true God: That their distinction between swearing by the temple and the God of the temple was nugatory and vain; because, if their oath meant any thing at all, it meant an invocation of God himself: That it was solemn trifling with God himself, to imagine they were at liberty to break their vows if the name of God was not directly invoked in the engagement into which they had entered. As to such oaths as were an invocation of mere creatures, it was sinful

ix. 4, ii. 6 And where mention is made of a thing spoken by another, the phrase is still *to speak* *in* *his* *name*, or *to speak* *for* *him*.
 2. Because the words, thus cited, are spoken to them of old." Vid. FREDERIC. SPANHEIM. P. Dub. Evan. P. III. Dub. 138. GROTIUS, in v. 21. LUDOVIC. CAPELL. *ibidem*.

to enter into them at the first; and, if the matter of them was lawful, equally sinful to break them after they had been made. Again, Christ reprobated their swearing by creatures, in their ordinary conversation. Their false doctrine, on this head, seems to have been this, That they answered all the import of the third commandment, if they did not use any of God's names in their ordinary conversation; although they swear by his creatures: But the great teacher assured them, he would not bestow his glory on any creature, however glorious. The scope of this testimony, as explained by Christ, seems to be, as if he had said, "Ye have heard that it has been said unto the fathers, by various inspired persons, in sundry places of the Old Testament, Ye shall not incur the dreadful guilt of perjury, neglecting to accomplish such promises as have been ratified by a solemn appeal to God: Thou shalt, on the other hand, perform these solemn engagements in the most exact manner, and that unto Jehovah himself; for, as he is both the party to whom thou hast sworn and the object invoked when thou enteredst into the oath; so he will exact the punctual accomplishment of it. But I solemnly declare unto you, that ye much narrow the meaning of the Law, if ye confine the whole import of this precept unto that species of duty: Its demands are vastly wider, as it prohibits a great variety of things in which ye indulge yourselves; such as, swearing by crea-
tures

tures in ordinary conversation, as well as the breach of those promises which are ratified by appeal unto inferior beings. Ye ought, by all means, to give up those criminal indulgences; and not leave the performance of your vows undone."

6. THAT our Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, took his disciples engaged, oftener than once, unto such particular articles of doctrine, and parts of duty as were then opposed. The personal ministry of Christ belonged, indeed, to the Church of the circumcision; but it was a prelude likeways of his kingdom in the Gospel state; or, as an interlude between the two dispensations: Hence Christ did not enter upon the renovation of such covenants as bound unto an observance of the ritual system; for he came to finish that system: Neither did he take them bound unto the institutions of the Gospel æconomy; for that was not yet formed. But there were various doctrines which were the PRESENT TRUTH in that period; such as, That Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah; and that he is the Son of the living God: There were also duties correspondent unto these truths; namely, acknowledging him to be the true Messiah, receiving his doctrine, cleaving to his person, and owning his cause. Now, we will find, that Christ took his disciples engaged unto the profession of these truths, and observance of these duties; yes,

a, he required a renovation of these engagements, and they confirmed them with a solemn appeal unto his own omniscience. Hence, says late writer of distinguished merit, "In the days of Christ's humiliation we have an example of it, (viz. of social vowing). At a certain time, when many who professed steadfastness in their attachment to Christ's person and ministrations had gone back,—He put a question to the twelve,"—"Will ye also go away?" Peter took the sentiments of the whole, in a PUBLIC vow,—“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: And we believe and are sure, That thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” This declaration contains not only the essentials of a vow, but even the very form of it. It is made not merely concerning Christ, but to him; it contains a dedication of themselves to him for time and eternity, as the Lord of eternal life; and it is attended with a solemn profession of their faith concerning the character of Christ, on whom they believed. In short, Peter said all that can be expressed in the most prolix form of words used in any solemn vow.—We have another example of solemn vows from the lips of the same confessor, after Christ's resurrection. Peter had shamefully deserted, and wickedly denied his Lord. His divine master, in order to restore him to the other disciples, whom, he doubt, he had scandalized by his conduct; and to give the other Apostles assurance, that

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his commission of apostleship was not forfeited;—drew him to a solemn public vow of his love to the master whom he had lately denied; yea, to a confirming his vow by swearing, as he had, on that occasion, denied him with CURSES and OATHS. “Simeon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord! thou knowest that I love thee,” &c. Here is both a formal public vow, and a formal public appeal to the omniscience of Christ, with regard to his sincerity in his vow. It is true, though it be a public vow it is not social: But the reason is obvious. The other apostles were not associates with him in the act of denying his Lord: But, had they been in the same case with Peter, the same reason would have pleaded for extending the question to them all; in order to their jointly professing their love to Christ, in a social as well as a public vow*.”

* See Mr GRAHAM'S Discourses on Covenanting.

DISSERTATION XVI.

O N

COVENANTING

I N T H E

APOSTOLIC CHURCHES.

2 COR. viii. 5. HEB. iv. 14. and x. 23.

THE Gospel Church, constituted by Christ immediately after his resurrection, was propagated by his inspired Apostles, according to the model he shewed them by his Spirit; and particular churches were formed according to that original pattern. The Church of Macedonia, was formed on that of Jerusalem, which last was the first particular church under the better œconomy. These societies, however, were not MOLES ABSQUE NERVIS; but firmly bound together by ligaments, flowing from the will of their original founder. To ascertain the truth in this matter, we may,—

I. Consider the Terms on which persons were

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admitted to special fellowship in these societies.—II. The Solemnities they used to testify their acceptance of these terms.—III. Then enquire If these engagements, on particular occasions, were renewed by the members of the Apostolic Churches, and that with divine approbation.

FIRST, I shall attend unto the **TERMS** on which persons were admitted into the Apostolic Churches; and, as far as we know, they were,

I. A **PROFESSION** of faith in the Apostolic doctrine. How many articles were explicitly professed is not easily ascertained; yet we may easily form a judgment of them from such particular instances as are to be found in the sacred history. The first time the Church exercised this power was on the day of Pentecost; but the terms of their assent are not recorded at length. The sacred historian only observes, in the general, that young converts “received the word, and that they continued in the apostles **DOCTRINE**.” But it is probable they laid the foundation in doctrines concerning the person of Christ; faith in him; conversion to God through him; baptism with water, as the sign of internal baptism with the Holy Ghost: For the sacred historian assures us, that Peter preached on these subjects unto the people; “and with

with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." When he TESTIFIED, he declared the extent of his creed; and left a testimony against the dreadful evils of that untoward generation: And that testimony was received by the multitude which was added to the Church. This was the basis of their communion; otherways, they could not be said to have "continued in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Another instance is, the erection of the Church of Samaria. When the Evangelist Philip preached Christ unto them, they believed concerning the kingdom of God, and in the name of Jesus Christ; and, upon their profession of this faith to him, they were baptized by him. Though it is presumeable, that many of them believed unto the saving of the soul; yet it is plain, that the faith mentioned cannot be confined unto this species: For Simon Magus BELIEVED; but the sequel proved the insufficiency of his faith unto salvation. The truth is, neither the Apostles nor Evangelists, when admitting persons into the Gospel Church, acted according to their extraordinary gifts—discerning the spirits; but they acted as ordinary officers—satisfying themselves with a judgment of charity, without a judgment of certainty as to the internal state of the persons received; and this part of their conduct affords a rule of procedure in every suc-

ceeding age.—The case of the Ethiopian Eunuch likewise, ought by no means to be omitted. Prior to his admission to the sacrament of baptism, Philip demanded a confession of his faith: He complied with that demand, —he confessed that special article for which Christ died a martyr; and this was no other than that of his Sonship. The Jewish Church accounted that doctrine blasphemy; and the high-priest rent his clothes, in token of detestation, when Jesus Christ made a confession of it. This opposition to that doctrine made it the **WORD OF CHRIST'S PATIENCE**, and the **PRESENT TRUTH**. Hence, the officers of the Church demanded an explicit confession of this, and other truths of the same kind; and an implicit confession of all other truths included in them: For there is an inviolable connection between every part of the sacred system.

2 **THOSE** who were stewards of the mysteries of God, required also a profession of Repentance, in order unto membership in the Gospel Church. While persons were in an outcast state, they were drenched in wickedness, as well as misled by error: Hence, it became them to renounce the former as well as the latter; as a pure heart and practice are of equal importance in sacred society with a sound mind. Thus, Peter exhorted the converts, on the day of Pentecost, to **REPENT** and be baptized; and, on another occasion, to **REPENT** and be converted.

converted. And these commandments were exemplified in the Church of Ephesus: "And many that believed came and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many also of them who used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver."

3. ANOTHER qualification of membership in the Gospel Church was the observation of all Christ's Institutions. When Christ authorized his disciples to receive members into the Church of the New Testament, he prescribed this condition; and the mandate runs in the following terms: "Go ye, therefore, into all the world, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED, and lo I am with you always to the end of the world. Amen." What these things are has been declared in the foregoing Dissertation.

SECONDLY, I shall now consider the SOLEMNITIES by which persons confirmed their engagements to observe these terms.

1. THEY were confirmed by solemn declarations, responses, and promises. From the sacred history, already referred to, it is plain, that adult candidates for baptism were examined

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on such articles as were then controverted; and the questions put to them so formed as the affirmative contained an assent unto the doctrines opposed; and the negative a rejection of the errors condemned. Now, every one knows, that covenants were ratified by making proposals on the one hand, and accepting them on the other.

2. THEY ratified these engagements by oaths, and gave them the form as well as the nature of covenants. The inspired writers themselves suggest as much, I humbly judge: They assure us not only of the profession of faith, repentance, and obedience, which they made; but also of the SOLEMNITY by which that profession was ratified. This solemnity is marked in the very term by which profession is expressed in the inspired original. We shall run over a few Scripture testimonies for evidence in this matter: "And many that believed came and CONFESSED, and shewed their deeds *."—"Whiles by the experiment of this ministration, they glorify God for your PRO-FESSED SUBJECTION unto the gospel of Christ †."—"Seeing then that we have a great High-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our PRO-FESSION ‡."—"Let us hold fast the PRO-FESSION OF OUR FAITH without wavering;

* Acts xix. 18. † 2 Cor. ix. 13. ‡ Heb. iv. 14.

for he is faithful that hath promised *." The solemnity of our profession is marked in the term *HOMOLOGIA*, importing a covenanted profession. If we survey the writings of the New Testament, the term will be found to express such COVENANTS as are confirmed with oaths. When Judas accepted of the offer which the chief-priests and captains made him, his engagement is expressed by a term of nearly the same composition: "They COVENANT-

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* Heb. x. 23.—As the thoughts offered on this subject are entirely new, as far as I know, I shall lay down the foundation on which I mean to proceed, submitting the whole to the intelligent reader. Though this application of the term is new, yet this sense of *ὁμολογία* is by no means newly invented. PASOR observes, that it properly signifies a mutual STIPULATION: "Proprie usurpatur in mutua stipulatione, significatque factam stipulationem, responso suo ratam habere: ut quum unus quærit, SPONDES? Alter respondet SPONDEO. Posterior hic dicitur proprie *ὁμολογῆν* q. d. *οὐκ ἀρῆν* i. e. simul dicere affirmare, assentire, et confessione sua sese ad præstandum obligare." Lexicon N. T. in vocem. With him agrees HOMBERGK, whose criticism on the term deserves to be inserted in this place, "*ὁμολογία* hic utique est PAC-TUM ASSENSUS, DEDITIO et quæ significationes apud profanos passim occurrunt. Sic enim *ὁμολογίαν* πᾶν est FOEDUS FACERE, PACISCI CUM ALIQUO, quod exemplis non comprobabimus, quia Lexica eis plena sunt. Igitur (Heb. x. 23.) est tenere firmiter promissionem, vel conditionem FOEDERIS; quibus mediantribus assumti, et IN DEDITIONEM QUASI, ET FOEDUS recepti sumus. Sic 2 Cor. ix. 13." Vid. Parerga Sacra I. F. HOMBERGK in Heb. x. 23. Though various critics besides HOMBERGK have explained this term after the same manner; yet they appear to have been at some loss how to apply it.

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ED to give him money, and he PROMISED*, &c. Here it imports the acceptance of federal terms, and a federal engagement on the part of Judas. Herod's covenant, which was also ratified with an oath, is expressed by a term of the very same derivation with that under consideration †: "When Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod: Whereupon he PROMISED, WITH AN OATH, to give her

* Luke xxii. 6. ἐξομολόγηται. † Matth. xiv. 7. ὁμολόγησεν

Dr OWEN gives the best account of it of any I have met with, "ὁμολογία is properly a joint agreement, consent, or concurrence in the declaration of any thing. It is also used, in good authors, for a CONVENTION, COVENANT, or AGREEMENT. ὁμολογίῳ is but once used in the New Testament for TO CONFESS (1 John i. 9.), any other ways than as TO CONFESS is coincident in signification with TO PROFESS: And this hath obtained in common use; whence the doctrines that men profess being declared, are called their confession; or the CONFESSION OF THEIR FAITH. 1 Tim. vi. 12. Heb. iv. 14." Vide Expos. on Heb. Vol. II. p. 2. "It signifies our SACRED SUBJECTION unto the Gospel, and our SOLEMN DECLARATION of it." p. 299.—It were easy to shew, that covenant, or stipulation, is the proper signification of the term among good Greek authors, whether Historians, Poets, or Philosophers, Ælian H. V. Lib. X. cap. xviii. εἰς τὴν ὁμολογίαν, PACTUM TRANSGRESSUS EST,--HE BRAKE THE COVENANT. Take also the instances enumerated by STEPHANUS, as a specimen, "Ὁμολογία, Pactum, Pactio, Conditio, Compositio. Thucyd. ὁμολογία ἰστανεῦ dixit pro Conditione æqua, ut scribit Budæus. Sed alibi apud eum ablativus ὁμολογία varie redditur. lib. i. καὶ χρόνῳ ξυτίθηται καθ' ὁμολογίαν, Tandem composuerunt certa conditione,

her whatsoever she would ask." The authors of the translation styled the Septuagint (according to the Alexandrine M. S.), use the same term to express an oath and word by God himself, to confirm a threatening: "Behold, I HAVE SWORN by my great name faith the Lord*," &c. Yea, it has a special fitness to express the duty for which we contend, as well as civil contracts, or wicked combinations; as it is used both by classic authors in the Greek language †, and by the foresaid authors of the Septuagint, to denote a vow, which is nothing else than a sacred covenant ‡. Hence we may

* Jer. xlv. 26. † Exponitur et Vovère a Budæo in hoc loco Herodiani, ὁμολογῶντι χάρισμα, καὶ ἔδωκε σωτήρια.

‡ Levit. xxii. 18. Jer. xlv. 25.

tionem, vel certis conditionibus. Aut, Accesserunt ad conditionem et pactionem, ut etiam loquunter interdum Latini. Exponitur item, Tandem composuerunt et in fidem recepti sunt."—"Apud eundem non semel παραστήσασθαι aliquam verbum pro Ad deditiōnem adigere pactionem, seu compositionem. ut, ζυγίσαι καὶ τοῖς τὴν Ἐπιδάριον πολιορκούντας παραστήσασθαι ὁμολογία. Sed et ipsæ urbes dicuntur προσχωρεῖν alicui ὁμολογία, pro Dedere se seu deditiōnem facere pactionem, (aut etiam omittendo hunc ablativum) vel, In fidem se dare. Sic autem et ὁμολογίῃ χρῆσθαι, apud Herodotum. Item pro Fœdus inire, Pacisci. quod et ὁμολογίαν ποιῆσθαι apud eundem Thucydidem. Apud Aristotelem καθ' ὁμολογίαν Bud. vertit Cum eo ut pactum constituatur. Exponit autem et Stipulationem contractus apud eundem. Plato in Critone ὁμολογίας et Συνθήκας copulavit, ut Latine Pacta et conventa sæpe conjunguntur."—"Ὁμολογῶμεν ἀλλήλοις, vel simpliciter ὁμολογῶμεν, Plat. Inter nos convenit. Idem in Critone, ὁμολογεῖσθαι ἔργα καὶ οὐ λόγῳ, ita convenisse.

may justly conclude, that the Church of Ephesus was a covenanted church; yea, the profession of faith in all the Apostolic Churches was a covenanted one,—a profession by which they vowed to abide,—a profession unto which they engaged with every solemnity, that of an oath not excepted. This sense of the term is as agreeable to the scope of the place as to the usual acceptation of it. It was extremely proper to put the Hebrews in mind of those solemn engagements into which they entered at their first admission into the Gospel Church, when they were about to be exposed to hazard on account of them, lest at any time they should fall from their own steadfastness.—As to the season of this duty, It was performed prior to their admission to sealing ordinances, and special privileges of the Gospel Church: It was the foundation of fellowship among her members: They entered into these engagements even prior unto their admission to baptism; and, for this reason, the ancients termed it the BAPTISMAL COVENANT. The greater part of those who were admitted into the Gospel

venisse. Et cum infinitivo. *Isens, καὶ ἡ μὲν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ὁμολόγουσι εἶναι τῷ Νικοστράτου. Demosthenes, ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ ὁμολογήσαντα μὴ ἀποδώσειν.—Ὁμολογῶ Spondeo, Roganti promitto. ut Budæus exponit in hoc Libanii loco, ἐγὼ μὲν σὺνταμολόγηκα πρὸς ἐκείνους ὡς πάντως ἂν παρὰ σου τύχοι.*——“Sic dicitur ὁμολογῆναι μισθόν, pacisci mercedem.” *Theaur. Ling. Græc. in vocem.*——Also, consult VALESIIUS in notas ad HARPOCRATIONEM, p. 250.—LAMBERT BOS ANIMADVERSION. ad Scriptores quosdam Græcos, p. 24.

Church

Church being adults, they were capable of making this solemn declaration, to found confidence in the minds of those who received them.

—The system to which they assented was probably drawn up by such officers in the Church as received the candidates who offered. Thus, Paul drew up a FORM OF SOUND WORDS for Timothy: Said he, “Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me,” &c.

THIRDLY, I shall enquire if these engagements were, on special occasions, renewed by the members of the Apostolic Churches, and that with divine approbation. I conclude in the affirmative, for the following reasons.

1. **THE** Churches of Macedonia were brought into great trials, which they bore with cheerfulness and joy; and, at the same time, to exercise their liberality for the relief of the saints, which they did with readiness: But how did they achieve these things? “And this they did; not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.” This solemn dedication is not that which obtained at the admission of the members of these churches unto baptism; but such as took place a long time afterwards. It will not be improper, however, to take a more narrow survey of this text.—The duty performed, “They gave their own selves un-

to the Lord*." The foundation of faith in such a duty lies in that, or the like promise, "One shall say, I am the Lord's." They dedicated themselves unto him as his people. This is the only sense in which persons, already in a church state, can be said to give themselves unto the Lord.—The Apostle adds, "And to us, by the will of God." Learned men have viewed this testimony in various lights. Some understand it of subjecting themselves to

* The solemnity of this profession Dr OWEN treats, *EX PROFFESSO*, in another work besides his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. It may not be improper to make a few extracts from it in this place, as it is not in the hands of every reader: "The way whereby persons enter into a church state is, by *MUTUAL CONFEDERATION*, or solemn agreement for the performance of all the duties which the Lord Christ hath prescribed unto his disciples in such churches; and in order to the exercise of the power wherewith they are intrusted, according to the rule of the word. The things ensuing are clear and evident: 1. The Lord Christ, by his authority, hath instituted this church state. 2. That, by his word, he hath granted powers and privileges unto this church; and prescribed duties unto all belonging to it. 3. That he doth require and command all his disciples to join themselves in a church relation; warranting them so to do by his word and command. Wherefore, 4. This *JOINING OF THEMSELVES*, whereon depends all their interest in church powers and privileges,—all their obligation unto church duties, is a voluntary act of the obedience of faith unto the authority of Christ, nor can it be any thing else. 5. Herein they *GIVE THEMSELVES UNTO THE LORD*, and to one another, according to the will of God. 6. To *GIVE OURSELVES UNTO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST* is, expressly to engage to

to such as are over them in the Lord, to be guided by them in all the ordinances of the Gospel. Others understand it of giving their contribution into their hand, to be distributed according to their wisdom. The former, which is the most natural connection of the words, is most generally received.

THE persons who performed these duties are, as the connection intimates, the Churches

do and observe all that he hath appointed and commanded in the church; as the phrase every where signifieth in Scripture; as also, JOINING OURSELVES UNTO THE LORD, which is the same. 7. This resignation of ourselves unto the will, power, and authority of Christ, with an express engagement made unto him of doing and observing all his commandments, hath the nature of a covenant on our part; and it hath so on his, by virtue of the promise of his special presence, annexed unto this engagement on our part, Matth. xxviii. 19. 20. 8. There are three things required unto a covenant between God and men: (1.) That it be of God's appointment. (2.) That, upon a prescription of duties, there be a solemn engagement unto the performance of them on the part of man. (3.) That there be a special promise of God annexed thereunto (I would rather say prefixed), in which consists the matter of confederation, whereof mutual stipulation is the form; all concur herein."—" 11. There are many mutual duties required of all who join themselves in church societies, and powers to be exercised and submitted unto, whereunto none can be obliged without their own consent. They must give themselves to one another by the will of God; that is, they must agree, consent, and engage among themselves, to observe all those duties, to use all those privileges, and to exercise all those powers which the Lord Christ hath prescribed and

Churches in Macedonia. There were more than one church in Macedonia; and all of them seem to have concurred in this duty. The dedication was solemn and social; and the practice appears to have been universal.

THE season in which they performed this duty. This was not at their first erection. Independents have pleaded for church-covenants to constitute single churches, of no greater extent

and granted unto his church, Jer. l. 4, 5."——" 14. Now, whereas these things, in themselves, and for the substance of them, are known gospel duties, which all believers are indispensibly obliged unto, the more expressly our engagement is concerning them, the more do we glorify Christ in our profession, and the greater sense of duty will abide on our consciences, and the greater encouragement be given unto the performance of mutual duties; as also, the more evident will the warrant be for the exercise of church power. 15. The Lord Christ having instituted and appointed officers, rulers, or leaders in his Church, to look into the discharge of all church duties among the members of it, to administer and dispense all its privileges, and to exercise all its authority, THE CONSENT AND ENGAGEMENT insisted on, is expressly required unto the constitution of this order, and the preservation of it. 16. Wherefore, the formal cause of a church consisteth in an obediential act of believers, in such numbers as may be useful unto the ends of the churches edification, jointly giving up themselves unto the Lord Jesus Christ, to do and observe all his commands, resting on the promise of his special presence therein, giving and communicating all the rights, power, and privileges of his Church unto them; and, in a mutual agreement among themselves, jointly to perform all the duties required of them in that state; with an especial
subjection

tent than one congregation; but this was by churches already constituted; and it is extended to more congregations than one, on the occasion of their contributing to the relief of their brethren at Jerusalem. The churches of Macedonia consisted chiefly, if not wholly, of Gentile believers: At this time they intended a special act of communion with the Jews. How shall they accomplish it? They dedicate their persons unto the Lord, prior to the dedication of their substance for the relief of his people.

THE manner in which they performed this duty.—They gave it a first place, as a most proper prelude unto others; as it was a first, or principal duty.—It was unexpected. The Apostle expected, indeed, that they should attend unto the preaching of the gospel, and

subjection unto the spiritual authority of rules and rulers appointed by Christ in that state.”——“ 21. The same way for the erection of a church state, for the participation of the more excellent privileges of the gospel, and performance of the duties of it; for the substance of it is still continued, (viz. as under the Old Testament): For the constitution of such a society as a church is, entrusted with powers and privileges, by covenant, or mutual consent, with an engagement unto the performance of all the duties belonging to it,—hath its foundation in the light of nature, so far as it hath any thing in common with other voluntary relations and societies; was instituted by God himself, as the way and means of erecting the church state of the Old Testament; and consisteth in the performance of such duties as are expressly required by all believers.”——True Nature of a Gospel Church, chap. ii.

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the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; but, as these churches had been lately erected, and, as their members had covenanted at their admission unto special privileges, he did not expect a renovation of them at this time.—Nevertheless, it met with divine approbation. It was done ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD. THE WILL OF GOD is the reason of duty,—a valid reason unto every conscientious person: THE WILL OF GOD is the rule and measure of duty,—even his revealed will in his word. Little, if any, of the New Testament had been written when this duty was performed: The canon of it, at least, was by no means settled. But they had abundant notice of his will, as to this duty, in the Old Testament: And they never dreamed but gospel churches were built upon the foundation of the PROPHETS, as well as that of the APOSTLES.

2. I HAVE another reason for concluding that the engagements of Christians in the Apostolic Churches were, on proper occasions, renewed; and that is, The Testimony of Martyrs. Every martyr is, upon the matter, a covenant-er. When persons were brought to martyrdom, they gave not only an explicit testimony, for which they suffered, but their adherence was frequently repeated, and publicly avowed.

DISSERTATION XVII.

O N T H E

FOEDERAL TRANSACTIONS

WHICH OBTAINED IN THE

THREE FIRST CENTURIES

O F T H E

CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

IN the foregoing Dissertations I have been able to authenticate the facts I have narrated by inspired history. In the following, I must content myself with such evidence as can be produced from the monuments of uninspired antiquity, taken in connection with Scripture prophecy, relating to the times to which these memoirs do refer. The period under consideration has fewer monuments of the historical kind than others which might be mentioned,
* C c c c indeed;

indeed; but those which exist are genuine, and less enveloped in fable, than those of the following centuries, which were forged in the dark reign of monkish superstition and falsehoods; having apostolic men, for some time, as living members; so they had a more sacred regard for apostolic institutions, and kept nigher the pattern shewed in the mount. We have not related any of their deeds, as of equal authority with the example of inspired persons; or as of any authority at all, farther than they exemplify divine institutions. But in so far as they acted up, in any measure, unto the sacred standard, their example is worthy of our imitation. It becomes us to tread in the footsteps of the flock. The plan we design to pursue is,—I. To survey the Creeds, Confessions, and Covenants which took place during the time we have specified.—II. The Circumstances of the Church, which rendered these fit and seasonable.—III. The Natural and Actual tendency of such Transactions.

FIRST, I must survey the CREEDS, CONFESSIONS, and COVENANTS which obtained in the three first centuries of the Christian Church, immediately after the apostolic age. This province has been cultivated by many; but few have attended to it with that diligence and industry which the importance of the subject demands. Their labours, however, have been serviceable in this matter. I noticed already

ready, that the pastors of particular churches formed creeds unto such as submitted unto their ministry: Hence, we need not greatly wonder, if we find some verbal difference among them, while they were materially and substantially the same. It is our purpose to insert as literal a translation as possible of such creeds as have come to hand, subjoining the original in the notes; so that the intelligent reader may judge for himself as to the justice and propriety of it *.

IRENÆUS gives us the first composition, which bears the name of a creed, to the following purpose: "For, although the Church be diffused over all the world, yet she received from the Apostles, and their disciples, the Faith in one God the Father, Almighty, the maker

* Prior to Irenæus, we have a summary of faith which some style a Creed, others not, given by Ignatius. Tho' it does not bear the form of one, yet I have thought proper here to insert Bishop Wake's translation of it; as it is the same in substance with some others acknowledged to be creeds: "Stop your ears therefore, as often as any one shall speak contrary to Jesus Christ; who was of the race of David, of the Virgin Mary. Who was truly born, and did eat and drink; was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate; was truly crucified and dead; both those in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, being spectators of it: Who was also truly raised from the dead by his Father, after the same manner as he will also raise up us who believe in him, by Christ Jesus; without whom we have no true life." IGNATIUS's Epistle to the Trallians, chap. ix. Edit. 4. by Bishop Wake, London, 1737. .

of heaven and earth, and sea, and all things in them: And in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, incarnate for our salvation: And in one Holy Spirit, who announced by the Prophets the dispensations of Jesus Christ, the Beloved, our Lord, and his coming, and his being born of a virgin, and his passion and resurrection from the dead, and his ascension in the flesh into heaven; and his coming from heaven in the glory of the Father, to gather all things together into one, and to raise up the bodies of all men; that, according to the will of the invisible Father, every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth, to Christ Jesus our Lord and God and Saviour and King; and that every tongue should confess to him: and that he may exercise just judgment upon all, and send spiritual wickednesses, and transgressing and apostate angels, and all ungodly, unrighteous, and lawless and blaspheming men into eternal fire; but conferring life on the righteous and holy, who keep his commandments, and continue in his love, whether from the beginning, or from the time of their confession; and that he may give unto them immortality, and put them into possession of eternal glory*." The same author exhibits an-

* " Ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐκκλησία καὶ πᾶς καθ' ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης ὡς πρῶτον τῆς γῆς ἰδιοπαρμένη, παρὰ δὲ τῷ ἀποστόλῳ καὶ τῶν ἐκείνων μαθητῶν παραλαβῆσα τὴν, εἰς ἵνα Θεὸν πατέρα παύλαρκατορ, τὴν παντοκράτορα τὴν ὕψιστον καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὰς θαλάσσας, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αἰνοῖς, πῶς καὶ εἰς ἵνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν ὑπὸ τῆς ἡγεμενίας συνήρῃας," &c. Lib. I. cap. ii. p. 35, 36.

other form, greatly shorter, to the following purpose: "I believe in one God, the maker of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them, by Jesus Christ the Son of God, who, for his most eminent love to his own works, condescended to be born of a virgin, himself uniting man to God, and suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising (from the dead) he was received up into glory, and shall come in glory, the Saviour of those who are saved, and the Judge of those who are condemned, sending into eternal fire the perverters of his truth, —the despisers of his Father, and his coming*."

The next authentic monument, which presents us with any creeds, is the works of Tertullian. There are three forms of this kind in those works of his, which are acknowledged genuine. The first may be rendered into English in the following terms: "The rule of faith which is professed, is that by which we believe one God only, and no other besides the Creator of the world, who produced the universe of nothing, by his word, sent forth before all things: This

* "Credo in unum Deum fabricatorem cœli, ac terræ, et omnium quæ in eis sunt, per Christum Jesum Dei Filium, qui propter eminentissimam erga Figmentum suum dilectionem, eam quæ esset ex Virgine generationem sustinuit, ipse per se hominem adunans Deo, et passus sub Pontio Pilato, et resurgens, et in claritate receptus, in gloria venturus Salvator eorum qui judicantur, et mittens in ignem æternum transfiguratores veritatis, et contemptores patris sui et adventus ejus." Lib. III. cap. iv. p. 172.

Word

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extract from this Father may be expressed in the following terms: "There is only one rule of faith, and it alone is immoveable and incapable of being amended, viz. That which teacheth us to believe in one God Almighty, the maker of the universe; and in his Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised from the dead the third day, received up into heaven, now sitting on the right hand of the Father, who shall come to judge both the quick and the dead, through the resurrection of the flesh*." A few years after this author, flourished ORIGEN: Among the fragments of his works, confessed to be genuine, is to be found the following summary of faith: "There is one God who created all things, and formed them, who made the universe of nothing: The God of all righteous persons, from the first creation and state of the world,—of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enos Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve Patriarchs, Moses, and the Prophets;

mortuos. Qui exinde miserit secundum promissionem suam a patre spiritum sanctum Paracletum, sanctificatorem fidei eorum qui credunt in patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum." Contra Prax. cap. ii.

* "Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis, et irreformabilis, credendi scil. in unicum Deum omnipotentem, mundi conditorem, et filium ejus Jesum Christum, natum ex Virgine Maria, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, tertia die resuscitatum a mortuis, receptum in cœlis, sedentem nunc ad dexteram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos, per carnis etiam resurrectionem." De Veland. Virgin. cap. i.

and

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and that this God, in the last days, sent our Lord Jesus Christ, as he had before promised by his prophets, first to call Israel, and then the Gentiles, after the infidelity of his people Israel. This just and good God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, gave the Law, and the Prophets, and the Gospels, being the God of the Apostles and of both the Old and New Testament. Then, because Jesus Christ was begotten of the Father before every creature, it is himself who comes, that he might minister to the Father in every condition (for by him all things are made) in the last times, making himself of no reputation, he became man: He was incarnate while yet he was God, and continued to be man who was God: He assumed a body like unto ours, differing only in this, that it was born of a virgin by the Holy Ghost: And, because this Jesus was born and suffered in truth, and not in appearance, he died the death common to all men; for he rose again truly from the dead; and, after his resurrection, he having conversed with his disciples, he was taken up into heaven. They then delivered unto us, that the Holy Ghost is associated, in honour and dignity, with the Father and the Son*, &c. There is another Creed

to

* “Unus Deus est, qui omnia creavit, atque composuit, quique ex nullis fecit esse universa, Deus a prima creatura et conditione mundi omnium justorum, Adam, Abel, Sethi, Enos, &c. Et quod hic Deus in novissimis

* D d d d

diebus,

to be found in works ascribed to the same author; but, as there are some doubts whether they be really his or not, I shall not stay to consider it, but proceed to that of Gregory Thaumaturgus: "There is one God, the Father of the living Word, the subsisting wisdom and power, and character of the eternal, who is the perfect begotten of a perfect, a Father of an only begotten Son, and one Lord, one of one, God of God, the express image and character of the Godhead, the word of power, the wisdom that comprehends the whole system of the universe, the power that made every creature, the true Son of the true Father, invisible of invisible, incorruptible of incorruptible, immortal of immortal, eternal of eternal: And
one

diebus, sicut per Prophetas suos ante promiserat, misit Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum, primo quidem vocaturum Israel, secundo vero etiam gentes post perfidiam populi Israel. Ille Deus iustus et bonus pater domini nostri Jesu Christi, Legem et Prophetas et Evangelia ipse dedit, qui et Apostolorum Deus est, et veteris et novi Testamenti: Tum deinde quia Jesus Christus ipse qui venit, ante omnem creaturam natus ex patre est: Qui cum in omnium conditione patri ministrasset (per ipsam enim omnia facta sunt) novissimis temporibus seipsum exinaniens homo factus est, incarnatus est cum Deus esset, et homo mansit quod Deus erat. Corpus assumpsit corpori nostro simile, eo solo differens, quod natum ex Virgine et Spiritu Sancto est, et quoniam hic Jesus Christus natus et passus est in veritate, et non per imaginem, communem hanc mortem vere mortuus est; vere enim a morte resurrexit, et post resurrectionem conversatus cum Discipulis suis assumptus est. — Tum deinde honore ac dignitate

one Holy Ghost, having his subsistence from God, who was manifested unto men by the Son, being the perfect image of the perfect Son, the living cause of all living, the fountain of holiness, essential sanctity, author of holiness in all others; in whom God the Father is manifested, who is above all, and in all; and God the Son, who is through all: A perfect Trinity, whose glory is undivided, eternity and dominion unseparated. In this Trinity, therefore, there is nothing created, or servile, —nothing adventitious, or extraneous, that did not exist before, but came afterwards into it: The Father never existed without the Son, nor the Son without the Spirit; but the Trinity abides the same unchangeable and invari-

dignitate Patri ac Filio sociatum tradiderunt Spiritum Sanctum, in hoc non jam manifeste discernitur, utrum natus aut innatus. Sed inquirenda jam ista pro viribus sunt de Sacra Scriptura, et sagaci perquisitione investiganda, fane quod iste Spiritus Sanctus unumquemque Sanctorum vel Prophetarum, vel Apostolorum inspiravit, et non alius Spritus in veteribus, alius vero in his, qui in adventu Christi inspirati sunt, manifestissime in Ecclesiis pradicatur. Post hæc jam, quod anima substantiam, vitamque habens propriam, cum ex hoc mundo discesserit, et pro suis meritis dispensabit, sive vitæ æternæ ac beatitudinis hæreditate potitura, si hoc ei sua gesta præstiterint; sive igne æterno ac suppliciis mancipanda, si in hoc eam scelerum culpa detorserit. Sed et quia erit tempus resurrectionis mortuorum, cum corpus hoc quod in corruptione seminatur, surget in incorruptione, et quod seminatur in ignominia, surget in gloria." ORIGEN, in Proöm. lib. De principiis.

able for ever *.” This author was one of Origen’s pupils, in the Alexandrine seminary ; and this doctrine was probably instilled into him by it : It is expressed in terms less simple, and more philosophic than any former summary.—As there were Creeds composed by particular pastors, whose writings have been preserved to our time ; so it is highly probable, that, after churches were planted, the same Creeds were continued, and new members received, by testifying their approbation of them. A few instances might be adduced to this purpose : The Church of Jerusalem had a Creed, which bore its name, as well as those of Cæsarea and Alexandria. The first, extracted from the commentaries of Cyril of Jerusalem, runs nearly in the following terms : “ I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and all things visible and invisible : And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages, the true God, by whom all things were made ;

* “ Εἰς θεὸν πατέρα λόγον ζῆλον, σοφίαν ὑψίστης, καὶ δυνάμειν, καὶ χαρακτηρὸν αἰδίου τέλειον, τέλειον γεννητὸν πατὴρ υἱὸν μονογενῆς. εἰς κύριον, μετὰ ἐκ μένου, θεὸς ἐκ θεοῦ. ὁ χαρακτηρ καὶ εἰκὼν τῆς θεότητος, λόγος ἔνεργος, σοφία τῆς τῶν ὅλων οὐσιώσεως περιεκτικῇ, καὶ δυνάμειν τῆς ὅλης κτίσεως ποιητικῇ, υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς ἀληθινοῦ πατρὸς, αἰὶν ὡς ἀορατοῦ, καὶ ἀφθαρτοῦ ἀφθάρτου, καὶ ἀθάνατος ἀθανάτου, καὶ αἰδίοῦς αἰδίου. Καὶ ἐν τινύμα ἄγον, ἐκ θεοῦ ἦν ὁ παρῆν ἔχει, καὶ δι’ ἐοῦ πεφηνῆς [διλαδὴ ἦν ἀνθρώποις] εἰκὼν ἰου υἱοῦ ἰαλίου, ἡλίου, ζῶν ζῶντων αἰῶνα, πνεῦμα ἁγία, ἁγίῳ ἡς ἁγιότητος χάριτες,” &c. Τόμ. II. p. 278, 279.

who was incarnate, and made man; who was crucified and buried, and the third day he arose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come to judge the quick and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end: And in the Holy Ghost, the comforter, who spake by the prophets: In one Baptism of repentance, in the remission of sins; in one Catholic Church: In the resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting*." But when churches became pestered with corrupters of the faith, there were also Creeds formed by Councils, whether Provincial or General. That of Antioch, which was a Provincial Synod, met anno 272, and not only condemned Paul Samosatenus; but also gave out a Confession of their Faith, in direct opposition to his errors†. That of Nice is too well known to be here inserted; it is also beyond our time:—It was formed by what is called a General Council. But, as there were various forms of sound words unto which the primitive Christians declared their assent, in order to membership; so there were various special solemnities by which their assent was expressed. The learned VITRINGA avers, That they required an explicit covenant, ratified with the solemnity of an oath: His words are, "The primitive Church received none into

* Vide USSER. de Symbolis.

† Vide FORBESSII Instructiones Theol. p. 10.

her bosom, but such as were well instructed, and fully persuaded of the truth which they professed; then they not only encouraged them unto constancy by exhortations, but also bound them with OATHS, intermixed with various rites *." And the truth of this assertion may receive as ample proof as the nature of the thing can admit of: It being attested by contemporary heathen authors, as well as the suffrage of Christians themselves. The persons admitted were either adults, who being converted from heathenism, and having undergone various preparatory trials, were, at last, admitted into the Church by solemn covenanting: Or, they were such as had been baptized in infancy, in the Christian Church, and made a like solemn profession prior to their participation of the Lord's Supper. This covenant consisted of three parts, A solemn profession of faith, either in the terms of the Creed of that church into which they entered, or by responses unto particular queries put to them by the pastors.—A solemn renunciation of Sin, Satan, and the World:—And, A solemn dedication of their persons and services to our Lord Jesus Christ. This dedication had in it the nature of a vow, and was accompanied with an oath; having a solemn appeal unto the party with whom they covenanted: The truth is, ancient writers un-

* VITRINGA, Obs. Sac. Lib. II. cap. vi.

animously

animously testify, that this covenant was both sworn and subscribed. The most ancient testimony which can be adduced is that of Pliny: His Epistle to Trajan was written either in the seventh or tenth year of the second century; and, at the longest computation, within twelve years of the death of the Apostle John; perhaps within five or six after the canon of Scripture was completed. Hence we may conclude, that, as he represents it to Trajan as the general practice of the Church at that time, it must have prevailed every where in the time of that Apostle's life. His words are, "They affirmed, the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a certain stated day, before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God, binding themselves by a SOLEMN OATH, not for the purposes of any wicked design; but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which, it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal*." JUSTIN MARTYR, who lived near the middle of the second century, wrote his second apology about the year 160; and
be

* See MELMOTH's translation, p. 673.—The original is, "Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse vel culpæ suæ, vel errors quod essent soliti stato die ante lucum conyneri; carmenque Christo quasi Deo, dicere secum in vicem: sequere

he declares in it, "That baptism was given only to those who, to the Confession of their Faith, added a vow, to live according to their knowledge." TERTULLIAN, who came near fifty years later, frequently mentions the solemn abjuration of the Devil and his works. When inveighing against shows, and theatrical representations, urgeth their solemn covenanting prior to their baptism: "These things

que SACRAMENTO *, non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne finta, ne Latrocinia, ne ad ulterius committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent. Quibus peractis, morem sibi discendi fuisse, rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum promiscuum tamen, et innoxum."

* As some appear not to have understood the term SACRAMENTUM, I have subjoined the account of it which is given by FABER: "Sacramentum idem quod iusjurandum. Festus SACRAMENTUM dicitur, quod iurejurando sacratione interposita actum est: unde quis Sacramento interrogari dicitur, quia iusjurandum interponitur. Sacramentum perfidum dicere apud Horat. II. Carm. Od. xvii. Sacramento obligare, Cicer. Offic. Lib. I. cap. ii. Sacramento rogare aliquem, Quintil. Lib. XII. cap. ii. i. e. iurejurando adigere Sacramento dicere, Liv. Lib. XXIV. cap. viii. &c. *καὶ ὁμοίως* quasi de iurejurando militari dicitur ejus Exemplum apud Gellium, Lib. XVI. cap. iv. Vid. Lipsium, Lib. I. de militia, Dial. vi. Vocare ad Sacramentum, adigere Sacramento milites Sumere Sacramentum, &c. Et hoc sensu de Christianis potest accipi quando per Baptismum Ecclesiæ inseruntur iuramento que se Christo obligant. Hierom. Epist. I. ad Heliodorum, "Recordare Tirocinii tui Diem Christo in Baptismate consecutus in Sacramenti verba jurasti." Et ante hunc Tertullian: ad Martyres, cap. iii. "Vocati sumus ad militiam Dei vivi jam tunc, cum in verba Sacramenti respondimus." Vide FABER apud vocem.

(said

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(said he) belong unto the pomp of the Devil, against which we SWORE at the sealing of our Creed: And what did we swear against? That we ought not to partake of these things, either by deeds, or words, or sight, or presence: But do we not rescind our SUBSCRIPTION, when we rescind the testimony of it*, viz. by an unbecoming conversation. In his book on the soul, “Thou covenantedest to renounce him and his pomp, and his angels†,” viz. the Devil. JEROM also assures us, that solemn covenanting preceded baptism: “We enter into covenant with the Sum of Righteousness; and engage that we shall serve him‡.” The very use of Creeds seems to have been, that they might form covenant-articles between Christ and the person professing his adherence to it. The term SYMBOLUM seems to import as much. Says WITSIUS, “The Creed is called SYMBOLUM—it is the Tesseræ, as it were, of the COVENANT into which we enter with God at baptism; and the military oath by which these soldiers, who are faithful to Christ, are easily distinguished from perfidious deserters§.” Nor is SUICERUS otherways minded: He reckons it is so called in allusion to the military oath, or contract which soldiers made with the Emperor, when engaged into

* *De Spectaculis*, cap. xxiv. † *De Anima*, cap. xvii.

‡ *Jero* i in *Amos* vi. 14. § *In Symbolum*.

his service; for the Creed is the token of the covenant we make with God at our baptism. And this author is supported by the authority of AMBROSE, who styles the Creed, "The OATH of our warfare." As also of PETRUS CHRYSOLOGUS, who declares, "The covenant by which we have hope, either for present or future gain, was called SYMBOLUM, whether it be a divine or human CONTRACT." As solemn covenanting obtained in the first ages of the Christian Church, so it was continued until the days of GREGORY NAZIANZEN, as appears from a bond of his yet extant, the tenor whereof follows: "By the eternal Word I swear, even that great divinity, who, being the brightness of the Father's glory, and in nature equal unto him, came down to us from his eternal kingdom: I solemnly swear, That I will never embrace any evil opinions repugnant to the truth: That, in my Creed, I will never exchange the true God for another; even the eternal Word for one of an inferior character; and that, affrighted by no affliction whatever, will I ever consent to divide the honour due to the ever blessed Trinity*." From these evidences, I hesitate not to conclude, That, as covenanting obtained in the first centuries of the primitive Church, immediately after the apostolic age; so these covenants were ratified with the solemnity of an

* NAZIANZEN, *Ὁμολογίαν λόγου, &c.*

oath. I shall now enquire if they were subscribed: And the evidences of subscription are equally decisive. Says VITRINGA, "The baptized INSCRIBED (their names) in the tables of the Church, in the catalogue of believers, in the BOOK OF LIFE (if it be lawful so to speak). This appears from Cyprian, and the common practice of the ancient Church: And there is a Dissertation of Dodwell's, *DE DIPTYCHIS*, as these tables were styled, among his Cyprianic Dissertations, just now commended *." This subscription, on these tables, is considered by Vitringa as the accomplishment of that prediction: "And another shall SUBSCRIBE with the hand unto the Lord †." AMBROSE, when addressing such as had been initiated into the Church, and admitted to baptism, said to each of them, "Thy HAND-WRITING is registrated not only on earth, but also in heaven ‡." And GREGORY NAZIANZEN, addressed them in the following terms: "If thou hast SUBSCRIBED any other faith than that which I have taught, come and be ENROLLED AGAIN. And say to those who would persuade thee to change thy faith, What I HAVE WRITTEN I HAVE WRITTEN §." Should any ask if covenanting was a term of communion in the primitive Church? I would

* In *Is.* xliv. 5. † *Is.* xliv. 5.

‡ *Ambros. De Sacramento, Lib. I. cap. ii.* § *Orat. XL.*

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answer, That covenanting, accompanied with every requisite solemnity, was the mode of assenting unto the terms of communion. When an adult candidate offered himself for Baptism, or the Lord's Supper, and was ranked among the COMPETENT by such as examined him, In the audience of the congregation he solemnly dedicated himself to Christ, before the pastor dispensed the sacred rite unto him *. Now, if solemn covenanting was a term of admission to Baptism, so was it likewise of the Lord's Supper; for unbaptized persons might not approach the holy table. It was also a term of communion in the restoration of such as had fallen either into error or immorality, as well as the reception of persons at the first. I shall satisfy myself with the single instance of NESTORIUS, in this matter. The Synod of Ephesus wrote unto him in the following terms: " It will not answer the ends of religion for thee simply to confess the creed of thy faith; but thou must also assure us by OATH, that thou art of the same sentiment with us, and wilt teach the church the very same doctrine †."

SECONDLY, The propriety of these Creeds and covenants will appear, if we consider the

* The usual mode of self-dedication, as Vitringer and others deduce it from the ancients, was, *Εὐχαριστοῦμαι τῷ Χριστῷ.*

† Vide Acta Synodi in Tom. Council.

peculiar circumstances in which they were placed who framed and used them. When the Gospel was addressed to the Gentiles, after the resurrection of Christ, however widely they differed from the Jews in other things, they perfectly agreed with them in their opposition to it. The latter had formed themselves into various sects, each of which had its peculiar dogmas, strongly tinged with the spirit of error. Besides the common and capital mistake respecting the Messiah, which blinded them all, and prevented them from finding his prophetic characters fully answered in Jesus of Nazareth; the greater part of them shewed a superior fondness for human traditions rather than divine institutions. The Romans, who had swallowed the religion of all other nations, had not incorporated the Jewish system with their grand Catholicon however, although they had reduced Judea into the form of a Roman province. They were obliged to give a practical demonstration, that the Lord God of Israel cannot admit of any partner, or competitor, in his glory and service. On this account, they detested the Mosaic system, as far as they knew it. They imagined, the religion of Jesus was equally unsocial: Hence we find them sometimes confounding the Christians with the Jews; and detesting the former for the very same reason they abhorred the latter. But this did not hinder both Jews and Romans from conspiring to crush the doctrine of Christ Crucified

fied and Glorified, which is the centre of the Gospel. And the deadly feuds which obtained between the Jewish sects seem to have been forgotten by their union in persecuting the followers of Jesus. The Sadducees, who held much the same rank among them, as the deists among us, coincided with the philosophers of Athens and Rome, in opposition to the doctrine of a Resurrection, whether of Christ or his people. These men considered this doctrine as worthy of the keenest satire. The philosopher laughed in secret at the superstition of the priest and populace, while he publicly professed to revere the vilest deities; and most profound veneration for the most trifling, not to say impious ceremonies. They were full as much masters of dissimulation as any of our moderns, who profess the established religion of their country, while there is scarce an article of it which they believe. They were at less pains, at least, to undeceive their fellow-worshippers in this matter. Nor were the Jews more sincere, though better instructed than the heathen. But, as it frequently happens, the less persons are holy, and the more they are estranged from working righteousness, they trust the more unto their own merit; and are less sensible of their infinite need of a righteousness better than their own: So, in this instance, both went about to establish a righteousness of their own; the one, as it were, by the works of the Mosaic law; the o-
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ther, as it were, by the works of the law of nature, written on their hearts. The Philosopher and the Pharisee were alike enemies to the blessedness of the man unto whom GOD IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS. To combat these principles, to conquer these prejudices, was the work of the Apostles and first preachers of the Gospel; when, aided by the Holy Ghost, they first planted the Gospel Churches. We need not be surprized, though the cunning, but cruel priesthood, addressed the fears of the Roman Senate to procure a decree for crushing the kingdom of heaven in the bud;—they could not fail to represent every innovation in religion as fatal to the State; and the Christian religion, in particular, as calculated to convulse it to its lowest base. Nero, the hater of mankind, readily believed that the followers of Jesus entertained as great an enmity against their species as himself; or he was glad of this specious pretext to cover his own malicious designs. “Thus, all the passions, all the interests of men, fought for idolatry: How powerful is interest when it can cover itself with the pretext of religion or patriotism!” Thus the followers of Christ had to sustain the fury, endure the mockery, and confute the errors of the whole world; as these were visited in the Roman Empire. The idolatrous priesthood, having called in the aid of the sword to support their falling cause, it raged, with infernal fury, against every

every one who professed faith in the name of Jesus; but the more it raged, the more their number and fortitude increased. Before the end of the first century, there was not a province of the empire in which there were not multitudes of converts to the new religion. The faith and patience of the saints overcame the craft and cruelty of their persecutors. The assured hope of a glorious resurrection, which was brought to light by the Gospel, supported them under all the miseries of life, and death itself, in all the hideous forms in which it was presented.—Philosophy also found itself attacked by the first preachers of the Gospel, as to her notions of a Deity, and the creation of the universe; for they delivered the Mosaic system in its simplicity, without verging towards the fabulous traditions of the Jews, on the one hand; and the vain conceits of Epicurus or Aristotle, on the other.

THESE things are sufficient to account for the various articles which formed the Creed of the primitive Church. If we apply them, we will find, that each article was laid in opposition to some error then prevalent, and eminently suited unto the condemnation of it. The first article of almost every Creed, for example, was aimed not only against the general Polytheism of the nations; but also against the absurd notions of two principles, the one good and the other evil. The next asserted

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ed the creation of the universe, in opposition to the advocates for the eternity of it. The article respecting the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus Christ, in opposition to the Jews, who looked for another; as also, those false Christs who then obtruded themselves on the world. The doctrine of his Sonship was ever maintained, in opposition to all the malice of the Jews, who persecuted him to the death, because he laid claim to that high character, and so made himself equal with God. The doctrine of his Crucifixion stood always in contrast with that of legal righteousness: And the doctrine of his Resurrection and future glory was equally necessary, as a comfort to his people in suffering; he being the first fruits of them who slept: As also, in regard of the opposition made to it by the Jews denying the fact, on the one hand; and the Philosophers, Free-thinkers, and Sadducees, who denied the possibility of it, on the other. The doctrine of his Dominion was not only necessary, to exclude every strange lord; but also as a badge of loyalty among all who named his name. And the assurance of this article preserved his institutions in their purity and simplicity, as long as it was entertained by his followers.

FROM this specimen it is plain, that those articles which formed the Creed of the primitive Church were the PRESENT TRUTH in
* Ffff that

that age,—THE WORD OF CHRIST'S PATIENCE; and the TESTIMONY of his followers.

BUT when the Church began to spread abroad, and stand forth as the pillar and ground of Truth, she was far from being secure from the attacks of her enemies. A species of them, still more formidable than any yet mentioned, began the attack within her own walls. These were such of the heathen Philosophers as had embraced the profession of Christianity;—they endeavoured to blend divine mysteries with the peculiar system of the sect to which they belonged: And temporizing Christians, who sought to trim the inspired system into an accommodation with the dogmas of the heathen religion. The former tried to spoil religion through philosophy; and the latter through vain deceit. They began to be weary of contending against the multitude, and striving against the stream of opposition to which the former Christians had been exposed: They thought it easier, by much, to sail with the wind, down the current of vulgar prejudices; and to borrow the reputation of philosophy, to screen their system of divinity from ignominy.

THE Church was in danger of this infection as early as the days of the Apostles; but it raged with far more fury afterwards. The mixture

mixture was so dreadfully dangerous, that we need not greatly wonder, if the faithful overseers of the Church used every lawful precaution to prevent it. This shews the propriety of keeping persons, who sought admission into the church, so long in the state of catechumens; as also of the diligence they used, both in instruction and examination, before they admitted them to actual membership, and special fellowship.

THIRDLY, Should any enquire, What were the Effects of these Transactions? We shall mention only two of them.

1. **DISTINGUISHED HOLINESS** in the lives and conversations of Christians. While the care and watchfulness of the Church excited her to bring all her members under solemn engagements, both in respect to their profession and conversation, her success bore some proportion to her diligence. Their enemies were obliged to acknowledge their innocence and purity in all things, except in their obstinacy in cleaving to the Truth. Pliny seems forced to own their innocence in all things, excepting with respect to their God: "I put two female slaves to the torture (said he);—but I could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition."

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2. ANOTHER Effect of these Transactions was Courage and Constancy in Death. Mr Adam, in his controversy with Glas, gives us the following anecdote: "When he (Irenæus) was bishop of Lyons, in France, he brought his congregation under a solemn bond to adhere unto Christianity, not only in opposition to Heathenism; but likewise to the many Sects and Heresies which then prevailed; and wrote unto the neighbouring bishops to do the same: Of which engagements he minds some of his friends, when they were going together to martyrdom *." For which he quotes Eccl. Epit. p. 58. by I. S. Upon which Mr Adam makes this reflection, "So that this Father looks as like an old Scotch Covenanter as any thing I can imagine."

* See Adam's Review of Letters, p. 50.

DISSERTATION XVIII.

ON THE

FOEDERAL TRANSACTIONS

WHICH OBTAINED IN THE

REFORMED CHURCHES ABROAD.

DURING the reign of Antichrist, the Witnesses of Jesus prophesied in sackcloth, and were driven into corners; nevertheless he still reserved unto himself a seed to do him service in the world. It were a task sufficiently worth while, to attend unto their Testimony, on the one hand; and unto the image of divine ordinances, which the Man of Sin substituted in the place of Christ's institutions, on the other hand; As also to trace this corruption unto its genuine source; but these things require more room than can be spared in this treatise.—I. I shall survey the Testimony of the Waldenses and Bohemian brethren, who were a noble prelude of the Reformation.—II. I shall specify some of the most remarkable Foederal Transactions which obtained in the Reformed Churches themselves.

FIRST,

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ought to enjoy neither Secular nor Ecclesiastic Dignity, neither ought he to be obeyed.

POPI^SH Confirmation, Chrism, Extremie Unc-
tion, are by no means sacraments.

AURICULAR CONFESSION is mere trifling:
It is enough for persons to confess their sins to
God, in their closets.

BAPTISM to be received by water, without
the mixture of oil.

CONSECRATED Burial-places are vain; be-
ing invented merely for the sake of gain:
And it is of no importance what kind of dust
cover the human body after it is dead.

THE Temple of the Omnipresent God is
the whole world; and they limit his Maje-
sty, who confine his presence to consecrated
churches, monasteries, and oratories, which they
build unto him; as if the divine goodness may
be found more propitious in them than any
where else.

SACERDOTAL Vestments and Vessels are of
no use.

A PRIEST may consecrate the sacrament of
Christ's Body at any time, and in any place;
and it is sufficient to say the words of institu-
tion.

THE Prayers of such Saints as are reigning
with Christ in heaven are sought in vain; nei-
ther can they help, in any case.

IT is mere spending of time to chant Pray-
ers in certain canonical hours, and at other
times to neglect that duty.

THE

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THERE is no day in which persons should cease from labour, but the Lord's Day.

THE Feasts of the Saints are to be rejected.

THE Fasts appointed by the Church have no merit *."

THE ancient monuments, collected by the Centuriators Madeburgienscs, add to the above,

"**THE** highest authority, in Articles of Faith, is in the holy Scriptures; for which cause they are to be the rule of judgment, and whatever does not agree with them must be rejected.

FATHERS and Councils are to be approved of only as far as they agree with the word of God.

THE Reading and Knowledge of the holy Scriptures belong unto all men, whether priest or people; and it is not only free, but necessary; yea, they ought rather to read the Apostles and Prophets than the commentaries of men on them.

THERE are only two Sacraments in the Church of Christ; namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Christ instituted both kinds (both the bread and wine) for the use of both priest and people.

* **USHER** De Successione Christianarum Eccl. p. 189.

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MASSES are impious; and it is madness to say Mass for the Dead.

PURGATORY is a figment of men: For believers go immediately into eternal life; and unbelievers into eternal damnation.

IT is idolatrous worship to Pray unto Saints.

THE Church of Rome is the Whore of Babylon.

THE Pope and his Clergy are not to be obeyed; as they are wolves to the Church of Christ.

THE Pope is not Head of every Church, neither hath he the power of both swords.

THE Church of Christ is wherever persons hear the sincere word of Christ; and use such Sacraments as he hath appointed, whatever be the place in which she exists.

VOWS of Perpetual Celibacy are human figments, and nurseries of Sodomy.

As many Orders, so many characters of the Beast.

MONKERY is a Fœtid Carcase.

THE many superstitious dedications of Temples, the memorials of the Dead, the benedictions of Creatures, Peregrinations, the multitude of forced Fasts, superstitious Feasts, perpetual roaring of Unlearned Men, the observation of the rest of the Ceremonies, manifestly hindering the Doctrines and Institutions of the Word, are the inventions of the Devil.

THE Marriage of Priests is lawful and necessary *."

* **USHER** ut Supra, p. 190, 191.

THE other Creed, or Confession, may be expressed in our language thus,

“WE believe in one God, three in one; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: And that the Son of God took our flesh, was baptized in Jordan, fasted in the desert, preached our salvation, suffered, was dead, and buried, continued in the state of the dead, rose the third day, ascended up into heaven; sent the Comforter on the day of Pentecost; shall come in the day of judgment to judge the quick and the dead; when all shall arise. We know, that what we believe with the heart, we ought to confess with the mouth. We believe, that he is not saved who does not eat the body of Christ: And that the body of Christ ought not to be consecrated but in the Church, and by a minister, whether he be good or evil; neither does its efficacy depend more on a good one than a bad one. We believe, that men and women are not saved unless baptized, and little children are saved by baptism; and both men and women are saved, although they be married; and every one ought to repent with the heart, profess with the mouth, and to be baptized in the church by the priest: And if any other thing can be shewed by the Gospel we ought to believe it*.”

THERE is also a Confession of Faith to be found in PETRIE'S History of the sixteenth

* USHER ut supra, p. 294, 295.

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century, presented unto King VLADISLAUS, anno 1508. And there is yet another Creed to be found in USHER's account of the Western Churches, which is too long to be here inserted: It was offered to the King of France in the years 1544, and 1551. The truth is, part of the Waldenses who seem to have emigrated from the vallics, settled in Bohemia, and became of the number of the followers of Hufs. These, immediately after the murder of their leader, in like manner formed a Confession of their Faith, or a Covenant, to be subscribed by all the members of their society*. My scarcity of books, and distance from a public library, has precluded me from making such a scrutiny, on this part of my subject, as it merits at my hand: Yet I find such evidence as, to me, is decisive, that Fœderal Transactions obtained among the followers of Hufs from

* An anonymous historian, of the Popish religion, declares, That, immediately after the death of Jerom and Hufs, they extracted a formula of faith from their writings, in opposition to that of the Ramish: "De nommer des personnes capables de dresser un Formulaire de Foy tire mot a mot des écrits de Jean Hus et de Jerome de Prague, de se separer entierement de la Communion des Catholiques," &c. "La substance du Formulaire consistoit en ces propositions que le Pape n'avoit rien de plus que les autres Eveques," &c. And, after giving a summary of the contents of this Confession, he adds, "Après que le FORMULAIRE EUT ESTE SIGNE LES HUSSITES leverent une Armee," Histoire de L'Herésie de Jean Hus, et Jerome de Prague, Part II. p. 4, 9. From the fragment of John a Lasce's history of the United Brethren

from the very beginning ; and the farther they advanced in reformation, their Covenants assumed a more regular form. Their Fœderal Transactions were also solemnly sworn, universally subscribed, and frequently renewed. For a specimen, I shall insert that which was sworn anno 1571.

“ MEANWHILE, the reader must necessarily remark, in this place, the sacred communion which prevailed at that period, and even at this time still prevails, between the Churches of the Waldenses and the Protestants of Germany. He must likewise regard, with admiration, that bond of union which was drawn up and ratified in their assembly on the 11th of November 1571; and expressed in the following articles :

1. THEY all bind themselves, under the sanction of an oath, to maintain inviolably the ancient union, continued from father to son, between all the faithful of the evāgelic reli-

thens, we may see, that the Renovation and Subscription of Covenants were no strange thing among that body of people. And VOETIUS, who had good opportunities of knowing, assures us, That both the Waldenses of Tholouse and the Hussites of Bohemia, ratified their Fœderal Transactions with solemn oaths : “ *Potest autem a civibus in Fœdus Religionis jurari. Exemplum, vide 2 Paralip. 15. Talia Fœdera et juramenta fecerunt Ziska et Bohemorum pro defensione Hussitarum ; in Gallia ante sæcula aliquot Comitibus Tholosiani, atque pro Albigenensibus.*” De Juramento Religionis, apud Disput. Select. Tom. III. p. 1105.

gion of the Waldenses, down to their own time, and in no respect to deviate from that sacred connection; and this they do under the following conditions and promises.

II. **THEY** bind themselves to persevere in the profession of the true Christian Reformed Religion, hitherto observed by them; consisting in the belief and worship of one God, and of one Head of the Church, and Mediator between God and Man, Jesus Christ:—To adhere to the only rule of faith and manners, contained in the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, to which are joined the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, instituted by our Saviour:—In conformity to the same word of God, they promise to submit to the good external regulation and ecclesiastic discipline already established, and, to this period, maintained among them. They express their abhorrence of all heresies, and doctrines inconsistent with the word of God, as held forth to us in the books of the Old and New Testament.

III. **THEY** promise to be faithful and obedient to S. A. S. and to the authority of the magistrates established by her, in so far as their power shall be employed in a manner not incompatible with the rights of conscience and divine authority.

IV. **SEEING** there are always some who, in opposition to the capitulations and concessions obtained from the clemency of the Sovereign, endeavour

endeavour to disturb the peace of the Church and of its members, and to infringe the said concessions; they engage themselves to employ, each according to his ability, every mean that they shall judge necessary for maintaining the said Churches in general, and each of its members in particular, in the undisturbed enjoyment of the said concessions, by continual recourse to S. A. so long as shall be necessary, and by every other constitutional method; and such as are not prohibited by the word of God: And that all the Churches, in general, shall afford every legal protection and defence, proportioned to their abilities, to each Church, or particular member of them, who shall be molested on account of their religion; aiding them with their counsel, estate, and persons, as need may require.

V. AND, as questions may occur in regard to religion, application shall be made to the Churches in general, and an unanimous opinion be returned: For instance, if any particular Church is consulted in regard to a matter of religion, or touching the concessions, the said Church shall not give any opinion till they have taken sufficient time to communicate the business to the other Churches, and members of the Union: In short, they are to deliberate in common, to answer, and to act, by common advice; with all that modesty, candour, and sincerity which is suited to the spirit of good Christians.

VI. ALL

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VI. ALL and every one, in case any shall infringe the articles contained in this declaration of Union, are to be censured, and even corrected by church-discipline, so far as to be held, by the rest of the United Body, as schismatics and perjured, providing the crime demands such severity; no partial regard being shown to persons or characters.

To the performance of these Articles, they solemnly bind themselves, with hands lifted up to God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

DONE and Ratified the 11th day of November 1571.

THESE Articles of Union greatly animated the faithful of the Waldenses; and, on the other hand, very much damped the spirit of their adversaries, whose arts had been invariably employed in endeavouring to disunite those poor people, for the purpose of destroying them more effectually in succession. Meanwhile, it appears to me very remarkable, that, during the latest struggles of the Waldenses, when they had done nothing but renewed their ancient bond of Union, they had been decried; and, by the manifestos of the Court of Turin, and divers other publications, have been represented as having entered into a solemn combination to throw off allegiance to their Sovereign. Whereas, in the year 1571, there is not one to be found in the Court, or even among

among the clergy, of a spirit so malignant as to take advantage of any particular article, in order to make it believed by the Prince, far less by strangers, that the people of the Waldenses had entered into any unconstitutional measures, or bound themselves, by oath, to rebellion and revolt. Upon the whole, It will be in vain to look for any article of union that has been made, but in conformity to the above mentioned; nor any one else, of a later date, that militates, in a stronger degree, against that fidelity and obedience which loyal subjects owe to their lawful sovereign *."

SECONDLY, If we turn our eyes unto the Churches of the Reformation, we will find covenanting practised in every form, and with every solemnity that could possibly be appended. In the critical situation in which the followers of LUTHER found themselves, at the diet of Augsburg 1530, they essayed this important duty; and framed the famous League of Smalkald, which was renewed four years afterwards; which renovation I have been able to insert.

"BY the Grace of God, WE, JOHN FREDERICH, Duke of Saxony, High Marshall of the Empire of Rome, and Prince Elector, Lant-

* LÉGER Hist. General des Eglises Evangeliques Valles de Piedmont, Liv. ii. p. 46.

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grave of Truringie, and Marquis of Misne, as well in our own name as in the name of the noble Prince JOHN ERNEST, likewise Duke of Saxonye, our most beloved Brother, PHILIPPE, ERNEST, FRANCIS, Brethren Dukes of Brunswick and Lunenburg; ULRICH Duke of Wurttemberg, and in Deck, Erle in Montbelyard; PHILIPP Lantgrave of Hessen, Erle of Catts in Dietz, Zigenham and Nyer; BERMINUS and PHILIP, Dukes of Stetin, Pomern, Cassaburn, Wenden, Princes of Rug, Erles in Guskau; WOLFGANG JOHN, GEORGE, and JOACHIM, Brethren Princes in Anhalt, Erles of Ascanion, and Lords in Bernburg; GEBHARD and ALBERT, Brethren, Erles and Lords in Mansfeld; the Consules, Decurions, Tribunes, Senate, and People of the within named Cities of the High-Germany, Saxon, and Hanse, or on the See; that is to say, Argentina, Augusta, Frankford, Constantia, Ulme, Essling, Rentling, Memingia, Linde, Bibrac, Isua, Magdeburgh, Breme, Brunswick, Gollaria, Hamibria, Gottingia, Einbeck, Hamburgha, Lubeck, and Myndia, do profess, by these our Letters, in the name of us, our Heyres and Successors, and do signifie to all men, that seen the state of this Season, is every where very perillouse, and appereth so, that many men are about and practise to disturbe such as do cause, and suffer the syncere Doctrine of the Gospell to be preached and taught in their Dukedoms, Provinces, Cities, and Territories, (by the Grace of God) and which (abolishing

abolishing all abuses) doe studie to bring in Ceremonies consenting to the Word of God: and efforce them selves to divert them from Christs Doctrine; yea, by force and violence: and seen also, that the office of every Christian Magistrate, is not only to suffer that the sincere Worde of God be preached to his subjects; but also, with all his studye, care, and solitude, to provide (to his power), that the wholesome Doctrine of the Gospell and the Truth, onse known and professed, be not violently extorted, and they deprived of the same: For this cause, we doe knowledg, that it is our most Duetie and Necessitie, of the offices of our Magistrate, in case nowe or hereafter it shuld happen, that any man wold attempt and assay to divert us, or our subjects, by force or slede, from the Worde of God, and the Truth known; and to bring in again, and restore the ungodlie ceremonies and abuses already abolished (which God, by his good clemence woll forbyd, as we trust that no man woll attempt such thing) for to repressse such violence and perill from the bodys and souls of us, and our subjects, by the Grace of God, and for to excuse and avoid the same to the Praise of God, to the augmentation of the sincere Doctrine of the Gospell, and to the conservation of the Uniform Estate, Tranquillite, and Honorable Publick, in the Empire, for the love of the Nation of Alemayne; and also for the Commendation, Honour, and Good of our Dukedoms,

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Werr, or Violence, shuld be moved for the cause of the Word of God, or of the Religion; and that he to whom the Werr, or Violence is Imminent, wold permitt it to our knowledge, arbitracion, and deciseon; that then we all the rest of this Confederacion, and every of us, that be comprehended in this Christen Confederacion, shall be bound to take no lesse to Herte, and take in hand as diligently to provide for the same, incontinently as such Persons that be invaded shall require our Help, or that we shall know it, (with all our power) as tho' we shuld be assawted our selves, and for our own proper cause: And, therefore, without any delaye, and without any decepte or gyle, without taryeng for any other, with all our might and power, we shall be bound to Succour, Defend, and Helpe him that shall be assawted, after such Form and Manner, as for the Qualitie and Circumstances of the Thing, and the Tyme, it shall be adjudged most util, and most commodiouse to the rest of us; and like as, the Fidelite and Charite to be given and shewed to the Neighbors upon his Conscience and Salut shall teach him; and that we shall truly administer and deale oon with another. And that, in such case, never oon of us shall agree, compound, or make any Transaction or Trewes, without the assent and will of the rest.

Also, That this our Christen Confederacion, shal be taken and understanden to be in no wise Prejudicial or Hurtful to the Emperors Majestie,

Majestie, our Clementissime Lord; nor to any State of the Empire, or any other: But onely for the Conservation of the Doctrine and Truth of the Gospell, and of the Peace and Tranquillite in the Empyre and Alemayns nation, and to withstand wrongfull Violence from us and our subjects and ailyes; and onely in case of Defence, and in such case as every of us may bear and suffer the just Knowledge and Decision of his own Cause, as is aforesaid, and none other wise; and if any man wol be joyned to this our Confederacion, which is not comprehended in it already, so that he be dedicate to the Worde of God, and shall permitte the sincere Doctrine of the Gospell, conformable to our Confession, exhibited to the Emperors Majestie, and to all the Orders of the Empire in the Assemblie at Augsbourg, freely to be preached, taught, and kept in his Lands, Province, and Dominions, and wold constantly styck to the same Doctrine, he or they ought to be ascribed and receyved in this Confederacion, by the assent and will of us all.

AND bycause that Christen Confederacion, which shall be finished the Sunday invocavit, the year of our Lord 1537, hath lasted the other six years last past, between us, excepted us Ulrich, Duke of Wertemberg, &c. and us Bernim and Philipp, Dukes of Pomeran; us John, George, and Joachim, Princes of Anhalt; and the Cities of Augsbourg, Frankford, Kempt, Hariburg, and Mynda; We, at their
 Friendly

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Friendly and Diligent Peticion, have receyved them into this our Confederation; and we do bynde our selfs eche to other agyn, that this Christen Leage shall be proroged and extended, begynning from the said Sunday invocavit, 1537, by the space of Ten Yeres next ensuyng, as this Chrilsten Leage, by the Ten Yeres next ensuyng, ought to be kept and proroged constantly, syncerely, and bona fide, by us, and every of us, without any Frawde or Malign.

AND if it shall happen us to entre Werre with any man for the Doctrine of the Religion, or any other Cause depending of the same, that shuld not be finished within the space of the said Ten Yeres; yet, nevertheles, although the said time of Ten Yeres be utterly expired, yet the said Expedition shall be continued and prosecuted, and the Werre brought to an ende; and that then it shall not be Lawfull for any of the Confederates to exempte him of the same, nor hope upon exemption, and from that tyme it shall be Lawfull for the Confederates, to protract and prolong this Confederation, if they shall so think good.

WE, the foresaid Electors and Princes, Erles, and Magistrates of Cities, by interposition of our Feith insteed of an other, do Promise, and take upon us, for us, and for our Heires, constantly and perpetually to observe and performe all and singular the Premisses truely and syncerely as it behoveth Princes and Good Men. And that we shall nor doe, nor procure any thing

things, in any wise, to be done against this Leage and Confederation: But, in all Points, shall deale and proceed truly and sincerely, without any Frowde or Malengin. And, for more Credence and confirmation of all and every those Things, every of us, the said Electors, Princes, Byles, and Cities, in the name of us our Highnes and Successors, have caused our Seals, wittingly and willingly, to be sett to these Presents, which have been given the Yere of the Nativite of our Savyor Iesus Christ 1536." Cotton Lib. Cleop. E. vi. p. 303.

As to the Churches of the Reformed, as they are styled, Covenanting will be found as frequent among them: The Church of Geneva, for example. The form of the bond which they used has eluded my researches †; but Beza, who wrote the Life of Calvin, assures us, "that he contended, That, all the people being assembled, they should openly abjure Popery, and SWEAR unto the Christian Religion and Discipline, comprehended under a few heads: And although not a few refused, through the rage of faction; yet God granted, that, on the 20th day of July 1537, the capital articles of the Christian Religion and Discipline were

* Apud BURNET's Collection, p. 99—102.

† I am not certain whether the Articles of Faith, which were Sworn to and Subscribed, might not be the Confession of Faith which is entitled, "Formula Confessionis," &c. in Calvin's Works.

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ORN by the Senate and people of Geneva; public scribe setting them an example." The author also gives us to understand, that LEAGUE extended to Bern and Louſanne, as well as Geneva. The Churches of Holland tiſed this duty, as well as thoſe of Geneva and Switzerland. It appears, that every congregation had its own bond; and, when ſons offered to partake of the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, they entered into a ſolemn covenant, as the term of their admiſſion. ZEPPERUS, one of their miniſters, "When ſons are admitted to the Lord's Table, they make a public profeſſion of their faith before the Church; and likeways promiſe and covenant, that they will continue in that faith, and lead their lives accordingly *." CALVIN is to think, that it was a practice of this kind which, under Antichriſt, was transformed into CONFIRMATION †. And, as COMMENIUS ſays, the Bohemian Churches preſerved this institution in its purity: For ſuch as were admitted to ſpecial fellowſhip among them made a ſolemn profeſſion of their faith before the congregation, engaging to live according to the rules of the Goſpel ‡. This mode of admiſſion was not precipitately received among the Churches in Holland, however;

* ZEPPERUS de Polit. Eccl. Lib. I. cap. xii.

† Institut. Lib. IV. cap. xix. § 13.

‡ Hiſt. p. 46. Rat. ordin. p. 43, 46.

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Europe unto the most distant colonies of America did this practice prevail in the last century: For example, Mr Higginson and Mr Skelton, and other good people, that arrived at Salem in the year 1629, set apart the sixth day of August, after their arrival, for fasting and prayer, for the settling a church-state among them, and for their making a Confession of their Faith, and entering into an holy Covenant, whereby that church-state was formed. Now, the Covenant whereunto these Christians engaged themselves, and which was, about seven years after, solemnly renewed among them, I shall lay before my readers, as it was then expressed and enforced.

“ WE covenant with our Lord, and one with another; and we do bind ourselves, in the presence of God, to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself unto us in his blessed word of truth; and do explicitly, in the name and fear of God, profess and protest, to walk as followeth, through the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: “ We avouch the Lord to be our God, and ourselves to be his people, in the truth and simplicity of our spirits. We give ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the word of his grace, for the teaching, ruling, and sanctifying of us in matters of worship and conversation, resolving to cleave unto him alone for life and glory; and to reject all contrary

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ways,

ways, canons, and testimonies of men in his worshipping. We promise to walk with our brethren, with all watchfulness and tenderness, avoiding jealousies and suspicions, backbitings, censurings, provokings, secret railings of spirit against them; but, in all offences, to follow the rule of our Lord Jesus, and bear and forbear, give and forgive, as he hath taught us. In public or private shall willingly do nothing to the offence of the Church; but will be willing to take advice for ourselves and ours, as occasion shall be presented. We will not, in the congregation, be forward to shew our own gifts, either by speaking or scrupling, or there discover the weakness and failings of our brethren; but attend an orderly call thereunto, knowing how much the Lord may be dishonoured, and his gospel, and the profession of it slighted by our distempers, and weaknesses in public. We bind ourselves to study the advancement of the Gospel in all truth and peace; both in regard of those that are within or without; no way slighting our sister churches, but using their counsel as need shall be; not laying a stumbling-block before any, no, not the Indians, whose good we desire to promote; and so to converse as we may avoid the very appearance of evil. We do promise to carry ourselves in all lawful obedience to those that are over us in church or commonwealth, knowing how well-pleasing it will be to the Lord, that

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that they should have encouragement in their places, by our not grieving their spirits through our irregularities. We resolve to approve ourselves to the Lord in our particular callings; shunning idleness, as the bane of any state; nor will we deal hardly or oppressingly with any, wherein we are the Lord's stewards. Promising also, unto our best ability, to teach our children and servants the knowledge of God, and of his will, that they may serve him also; and all this not by any strength of our own, but by the Lord Christ; whose blood we desire may sprinkle this our covenant, made in his name*."

FORTY-SEVEN years after this, a Synod met at Boston for the purpose of Covenant-renovation. The tenor whereof follows:

"WE, who through the exceeding riches of the grace and patience of God, do continue to be a church of Christ, being now assembled in the holy presence of God, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, after humble confession of our manifold breaches of covenant before the Lord our God, and earnest supplication of pardoning mercy through the blood of Christ,—after deep acknowledgment of our great unworthiness to be owned to be the Lord's cove-

* MATHER'S History of New England, Book I. p. 18.

nant people ; also, acknowledging our own inability to keep covenant with God, or to perform any spiritual duty, unless the Lord Jesus enable thereto by his Spirit dwelling in us : And being awfully sensible, that it is a dreadful thing for sinful dust and ashes personally to transact with the infinitely glorious majesty of heaven and earth, we do, in humble confidence of his gracious assistance and acceptance thro' Christ, each one of us for ourselves, and jointly as a Church of the living God, and one with another, in manner following :

WE do give up ourselves to that God whose name alone is Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the One only true and living God, and to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, as our only blessed Saviour, Prophet, Priest, and King over our souls, and only mediator of the Covenant of Grace, promising (by the help of his Spirit and grace) to cleave unto God as our chief good, and to the Lord Jesus-Christ, by faith and gospel obedience, as becometh his covenant people for ever. We do also give our offspring unto God in Jesus Christ, avouching the Lord to be our God, and the God of our children, and ourselves, with our children, to be his people ; humbly adoring the grace of God, that we, and our offspring with us, may be looked upon to be the Lord's.

WE do also give up ourselves one to another in the Lord, and according to the will of God ;
freely

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freely covenanting and binding ourselves to walk together as a right ordered congregation and church of Christ, in all the ways of his worship, according to the holy rules of the word of God ; promising, in brotherly love, to watch over one another's souls faithfully, and to submit ourselves unto the discipline and government of Christ in his Church, and duly to attend to all those ordinances which Christ hath instituted in his Church, and commanded to be attended by his people, according to the order of the Gospel and the degrees of communion unto which we have attained ; not resting in measures attained, but pressing after all : And whereas the messengers of those Churches, who have met together in the name of Christ, to enquire into the reason of God's controversy with his people, have taken notice of many provoking evils, as the procuring causes of the judgments of God upon New England : So far as we, or any of us, have been guilty of provoking God by any sin therein discovered to us, we desire, from our hearts, to wail it before the Lord, and humbly to entreat for pardoning mercy, for the sake of the blood of the Everlasting Covenant : And as an expedient to the reformation of those evils, or whatever else has provoked the eyes of God's glory amongst us, We do freely engage and promise, as in the presence of God,

FIRST, That we will (Christ helping) endeavour, every one of us, to reform our heart
and

and life, by seeking to mortify all our sins, and labouring to walk more closely with God than ever yet we have done; and will continue to worship God in public, private, and secret; and this without formality or hypocrisy: And more fully and faithfully than heretofore, to discharge all covenant-duties, one to another, in church-communion.

SECONDLY, To walk before God in our houses with a perfect heart, and that we will uphold the worship of God continually therein, according as he, in his word, doth require; both in respect of prayer and reading the Scriptures, that so the word of God may dwell richly in us: And we will do what in us lies to bring up our children for Christ, that they may be such as have the Lord's name put upon them, as, by a solemn dedication to God in Christ, ought to be: And will, therefore (as need shall be), catechise, exhort, and charge them to the fear of the Lord; and endeavour to set an holy example before them, and be much in prayer for their conversion and salvation.

THIRDLY, To endeavour to be pure from the sins of the times; especially those sins which have been, by the late Synod, solemnly declared and evidenced to be the evils that have brought the judgments of God upon New England; and, in our places, to endeavour the suppression thereof, and be careful

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so to walk as that we may not give occasion to others to sin, or speak evil of our holy profession.

Now, that we may observe and keep this sacred covenant, and all the branches of it, inviolable for ever, we desire to deny ourselves, and to depend wholly upon the power of the Eternal Spirit of Grace, and on the free Mercy of God, and Merit of Christ Jesus; and where we shall fail, there to wait upon the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon, acceptance, and healing, for his name's sake*."

TIME

* MATHER ut supra, p. 95. — The Acknowledgment of Sins, mentioned in the foregoing bond, consisted of fourteen distinct parts. The duty of confessing the guilt of covenant-violation preceded that of covenant-renovation; and the manner of covenanting is described, by this historian, in the following terms: "In this Renewal of Covenant, there were some Churches, who, from I know not what objections, of there being no express warrant for it in the New Testament, and their doing it implicitly in every act of divine worship, and the imaginary danger of innovations, would not comply with the advice of the Synod: But all the virgins were not so sleepy; and very remarkable was the blessing of God upon the Churches which did not so sleep. In short, many of the Churches having, on previous days of fasting and prayer, considered the expectations of God concerning them, they were willing, a new to declare their most explicit consent unto the Covenant of Grace, and most explicitly to engage unto a growing watchfulness in such duties of the covenant as were more peculiarly accommodated unto their present circumstances. They publicly devoted another day to fasting and prayer, whereat a vast confluence of other neighbours were usually present; and, on this day, the

* K k k k minister

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TIME would fail me to delineate the social covenanting which took place in the Protestant Churches, by their mutual subscription of each others Confessions of Faith; yea, and their swearing to maintain the articles contained in them, which they deemed the PRESENT TRUTH. Nor can I stay to insert the various leagues which were formed for the support of the Protestant cause, such as the EVANGELIC UNION, &c. That love which disposed the children of Christ to surrender themselves unto him, as their rightful Lord, disposed them to risk their life in the cause of their brethren in him. And greater love hath no man than that he should lay down his life for the brethren.

minister of the place having, in the forenoon, prayed and preached suitably to the occasion, he proceeded then to read the Covenant; whereunto the assent of the Churches was then expressed, by the brethren lifting up their hands, and the women only standing up: And many thousands of spectators will testify, that they never saw the special presence of the great God our Saviour more notably discovered than on these solemnities. MATHER, ut supra.

DISSEK

DISSERTATION XIX.

ON THE FŒDERAL TRANSACTIONS OF OUR RELIGIOUS ANCESTORS IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THERE are no monuments of the Church, in our native land, as far as I know, to inform us as to her practice prior to the rise of Antichrist. But, since his begun downfall, the Church of Scotland hath not come behind other Reformed Churches in respect of her Fœderal Transactions. At a time when MARY of Lorrain was violating every tie, and straining every nerve to wreath the iron yoke of Antichristian tyranny in the Church, and absolute government in the State, upon the neck of this land, the Lord was pleased to stir up a

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few friends to the civil and religious liberties of mankind, to form themselves into a CONGREGATION; unto whom, under God, we owe the preservation of our Liberties in the State, and the Reformation of Religion in the Church. To accomplish these purposes, they entered into a solemn Covenant as follows:

“ WE, perceiving how Sathan, in his members, the antichrists of our time, cruelly do rage, seeking to overthrow and to destroy the Gospel of Christ and his Congregation, ought, according to our bounded duty, to strive, in our Master’s cause, even unto the death, being certain of the victory in him. The which, our duty being well considered, we do promise, before the Majesty of God, and his Congregation, that we (by his grace) shall, with all diligence, continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives, to maintain, set forward, and establish, the most blessed word of God, and his Congregation; and shall labour, at our possibility, to have faithful masters, truly and purely to minister Christ’s Gospel and Sacraments to his people: We shall maintain them, nourish them, and defend them, the whole Congregation of Christ, and every member thereof, at our whole powers, and waging of our lives, against Sathan and all wicked power that doth intend tyranny or trouble against the foresaid Congregation. Unto the which holy word and Congregation we do joyne us; and so do
for sake

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forfake and renounce the congregation of Satan, with all the superstitious abomination and idolatry thereof; and moreover, shall declare our selves manifestly enemies thereto, by this our faithful promise before God, testified to his Congregation, by our subscription at these presents. At Edinburgh, the 3d day of December 1557 years. God called to witness. A. Earl of Argyle; Glencarne; Mortoun; Archibald Lord of Lorne; John Erskine of Dun," &c.

THE Occasions of the preceding Covenant were, The Danger of Persecution to which the preachers were exposed, from the bigotry of the Queen Regent: And the unsteadiness of the Reformers. Add to these, the importance of the Reformation itself: "Their country was in a miserable state of oppression; the bodies and souls of the people being holden in bondage."—"In the cause which they had embraced (the Reformers rightly judged), they ought to be fervent and strenuous. The Almighty, speaking to their consciences, called upon them to hazard their lives for the deliverance of the nation. Were they to prefer their worldly rest to the glory of God? Or the friendship of the wicked to the salvation of their brethren? And, while they were to receive honour and homage on earth, they expected eternal comfort and joy in heaven*."

* Dr STUART's History of the Reformation, p. 88.

THE next Fæderal Tranſaction runs thus :

“ AT Perth, the laſt day of May, the year of God 1559 years, the Congregations of the Weſt Country, with the Congregations of Fyfe, Perth, Dundee, Angus, Mearns, and Montroſe, being convened in the town of Perth, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for forth ſetting of his glory, underſtanding nothing more neceſſary for the ſame than to keep a conſtant amity, unity, and fellowſhip together, according as they are commaunded by God, are confederat, and become bounden and obliſt, in the preſence of God, to concur and aſſiſt together, in doing all things required of God in his Scripture that may be to his glory ; and, at their whole powers, to deſtroy and away put all things that doth diſhonour to his name ; ſo that God may be trewly and purely worſhipped. And, in caſe that any trouble be intended againſt the ſaid Congregations, or any part or member thereof, the whole Congregation ſhall concur, aſſiſt, and conven together, to the defence of the ſame congregation or perſon troubled ; and ſhall not ſpare labours, goods, ſubſtance, bodlies, and lives, in maintaining the liberty of the whole Congregation, and every member thereof, againſt whatſoever power that ſhall intend the ſaid trouble, for cauſe of religion, or any other cauſe depending thereupon, or lay to their charge, under pretence thereof, although it happen to be coloured with any other outward

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ward cause. In witnessing and testimony of the which, the whole Congregations aforesaid have ordained and appointed the noblemen, and persons underwritten, to subscribe thir presents. Arch. Argyle; James Stewart; Glen-carne; R. Lord Boid; Wchiltree; Matthew Campbell of Tarmgannar."

THE alarms of the Congregation, with respect to Persecution from the Popish party and the Queen Regent, were but too well founded. The Archbishop of St Andrew's having, in vain, tried the force of address on some of the heads of the Reformation, resolved on severity; but he was equally unsuccessful. It was determined to pour out a flood of persecution on the chief of the Reformers, while the Church should exhaust all her thunder: But WALTER MILL, a priest, was the only victim which he dared to sacrifice at this time. His Christian heroism on the one hand, and the barbarity of his execution on the other, struck the Reformed with unspeakable horror: "By yielding to the light of their conscience, they saw themselves exposed to a cruel death. By conforming to the established faith, they hazarded their salvation*." Subscriptions for mutual defence were taken. The covenant to establish the new form of religion extended from the few to the many. When the lead-

ers understood their strength among the people, from the great numbers of subscriptions, they resolved to supplicate the Regent; and, with their supplication, they presented a schedule, containing the preliminary articles of the Reformation which they craved. They also addressed the Council of the Clergy, and the Parliament. The Regent amused them with ambiguous answers till she procured advice from France. She resolved on measures of blood, and led an army against them. But, dreading the unanimity of the Congregation, and their zeal for religion, she had recourse to a negociation. As they had addressed her for peace, and not for war, a treaty was soon concluded. The treaty was not executed, however, without great suspicion of her artifice. She still harboured designs of blood in her heart. To prepare against future attacks, the Congregation judged it expedient, just after the treaty was finished, to form the foregoing Covenant.

A THIRD Covenant is to be found in the following terms :

“ WE, foreseeing the craft and sleight of our adversaries, tending all manner of ways to circumvent us, and, by privy means, intendeth to assayle every one of us, particularly by fair heghts and promises, therethrough to separate one of us from another, to our utter ruin and destruction:

destruction: For remedy thereof, we faithfully and truly bind us, in the presence of God, and as we tender the maintenance of trew religion, that none of us shall, in time coming, pass to the Queen's Grace Dowager, or talk or commune with her, for any letter or message sent by her unto us, or yet to be sent, without consent of the rest, and common consultation thereupon: And how soon that either message or writing should come from her unto us, with utter diligence we shall notify the same one to another; so that nothing shall proceed therein without common consent of us all. Att Stirling, the first day of August 1559."

TREATIES were cheap in the estimation of the Queen Regent; she could easily make them, and was stronger than Sampson in breaking them. By a treachery absolutely systematic and incurable, she violated the treaty made with the Congregation, assembled at Perth, as rapidly as possible. The Congregation again betake themselves to arms. Negotiation and skirmishing succeeded each other till, on the 24th of July 1559, a treaty was concluded, allowing the Congregation the free exercise of their religion. Immediately after the publication of this accommodation, the Congregation assembled at Stirling, and entered into the above Covenant.

THE Fourth Covenant runs thus :

“ AT Edinburgh, the twintie-seventh of Apryll, the year of God ane thousand fyve hundred threescore years ; We, whaes names are underwritten, haif promittit and obliedged our selves faithfully, in the presence of our God, and be thir present promitts, that we altogether in general, and every one of us in special be himself, with our bodies, goods, friends, and all that we may do, sal set forwart the Reformation of Religion, according to Goddes word ; and procure, be all means possible, that the true preaching of Goddes word may haif free passage within this realme, with dew administration of the sacraments, and all things depending upon the said worde. And sick-lyke, deiply weighing with our selves the misbehaviour of the Franche ministers heir, the intolerable opprellions committed by the Franchmen of weir upon the pair subjects of this realme, be meynenance of the Queen dowriare, under collour and pretence of authority ; the tyranny of their Captains and leaders, and manifest danger of conquest, in whilk this countrie presently stands, be reason of diverse fortifications on the sea-coast, and other novelties of late attemptat be them ; promitts, that we sall, als weell every one with others, as altogether, with the Queen of England’s armie, presently come in for our deliverance, effectually concurr and joyn together, taking onefold and plain part of the expulsion of the said strayingars,

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strayngars, oppressors of our liberty, furth of this realme, and recovery of our ancient freedoms and liberties; to the end in tyme coming we may, under the obedience of our King and Queen our soverains, be only reulyt be the laws and customes of the countrie, and by the men of the land: And that never any of us all haiff pryvy intelligence, be writing or message, or communication with any of our said enemyes or adversars in this cause, bot be the advyce of the rest, at leist fyve of our numbers. Attour, that we fall tender this present cause, as if it were the cause of every one of us in particular; and that the cause of every one of us now joyned together being leifull and honest, shall be all our causes in general: and he that is enemy to the cause foresaid, fall be enemy to us all; in so far, that whatsomever person will plainly resist thir our godly interpryfis, and will not concurr as ane guid member of this commonweill, we fall fortify the authority of the counsell, to reduce them to their deuty; lykeas we fall fortify the said authority of the counsaile in all things tending to the furtherance of the said cause. And giff any particular debate, quarrell, or contraversee fall aryse, for whatsomever cause bygain, present or to come, betwixt any of us, (as God forbid;) in that case we fall submit ourselves and our said questions to the decision of the counsaile, or to arbitrators to be named be them; provyding allwayes that this be not prejudicial to the ordinar jurisdiction

LIII 2

jurisdiction of judges, but that men may pursue their actions, by ordour of law, civilly or criminally, before the judges ordinars, gif they please."

THE design of the Queen and her French Catholics, in the above-mentioned treaty, appears to have been, that she might gain a little time, and procure a new reinforcement from France. With them comes some threats against the Reformed, from the husband of the Scotch Queen. But the Congregation was not to be intimidated either by threats or arms. Having received a considerable accession to their power and number, and finding the greater part of the nation in their interest; finding also, that the Queen Regent could not be bound by any tie, They formed a council of the nation, and solemnly deprived her of her Regency*. By the assistance of England, and the

* "In the Democratical genius of the Scottish Constitution, in the importance which distinguished the people from the earliest of times, there is the strongest vindication of this measure. Limited by laws, magistrates not despots, even the Monarchs of Scotland themselves, when they presumed to invade the rights of the nation, were exposed to the resistance and correction of the subject. The indignant people might vindicate their privileges and honours. Upon slight transgressions, they alarm the fears of their Prince; and repress, by remonstrance, the intoxication of their grandeur. Upon great occasions, and in the hard moments of tyranny, they might yield

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the blessing of Heaven on their endeavours, though sometimes checked, they triumphed over every opposition, and eluded the snares which had been laid for them. That they might be consolidated into one body; and that such as had lately joined them might be knit unto them by an indissoluble tie, they executed the preceding Covenant.

THE Fifth Covenant we have as follows :

“ WE quhais names ar underwritten, do promeis, in the presence of God, and in presence of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, That we, and every one of us, fall and will manteyne and assist the preaching of the holy evangell, now of his mere mercy offered unto this realme: And also will manteyne the ministers of the sam against all persones, power and authority, that will oppone the self to the doctrine proponed and by us receaved. And further, with the same solemnity, we protest and promise, that every an of us fall assist uthers; yea, and the hole bodie of the Protestants within this realme, in all lawful and just actiouns, against all persones: So that quhosoever fall hurt, molest or truble ony of our body, fall be reputed enemy to the hole, except that the

yield to the fullness of their resentments and their wrongs; making him a sacrifice to justice, and an instruction to posterity,—conduct him from the throne to the scaffold.” STUART, p. 148.

offendare

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offendare will be content to submit himself to the judgement of the Kirk, now establisched amongst us. And this we do, as we desyre to be accepted and favoured of the Lord Jesus, and reaccompted worthie of credite and honestie in the presence of the godlie. At the burgh of Aire the ford day of September the yeir of God 1562."

A GENERAL peace soon succeeded. The Confession of Faith, which is usually denominated the SCOTS CONFESSIO*N*, was offered to the Parliament, and established by it. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met, for the first time, soon after the Parliament; and that not by virtue of any indiction by the Prince, but by the Church's own intrinsic power. At the third Assembly, which sat down in June 1562, it was found the country was still in danger from Popery; as the Queen, who was returned a widow from France, patronized idolatry; and the labourers were few, especially in Galloway and Ayrshire, while the harvest was copious: Wherefore they sent Mr Knox and Mr George Hay into these districts. Their success was remarkable. A great part of the Barons, Gentlemen, and Burgesses, &c. assembled at Ayr, and executed the foregoing Covenant.

THE struggles of the nation, against Popery, were carried on with various success, without
any

any other Fœderal Transaction than those mentioned, till 1580. At that time, some Popish Noblemen seemed to have gained the King's ear, who had now assumed the reigns of government. They made a solemn abjuration of the Romish religion; but as their sincerity was called in question, on account of some dispensations sent from Rome, which were intercepted, they caused to be framed what is called the NATIONAL COVENANT. Mr CRAIG, who formed this bond, aimed it directly against the whole of the Romish corruptions, and that of dispensations in particular. The Covenant runs thus:

“ WEE all, and every one of us underwritten, protest, that, after long and due examination of our owne consciences, in matters of true and false religion, are now thoroughly resolved in the truth, by the Word and Spirit of God; and, therefore, we beleeve with our hearts, confesse with our mouths, subscribe with our hands, and constantly affirme before God and the whole world, that this only is the true Christian Faith and Religion, pleasing God, and bringing salvation to man, which is now, by the mercy of God, revealed to the world by the preaching of the blessed evangl.

AND received, believed, and defended by many and sundry notable kirks and realmes, but chiefly by the Kirk of Scotland, the King's Majestie, and three Estates of this realme, as
God's

God's eternall truth, and onely ground of our salvation; as more particularly is expressed in the Confession of our Faith, stablished and publickely confirmed by sundry acts of Parliaments, and now of a long time hath been openly professed by the King's Majesty, and whole body of this realme, both in burgh and land. To the which confession and forme of religion, we willingly agree in our consciences in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded onely upon his written Word: and therefore we abhorre and detest all contrary religion and doctrine, but chiefly all kinde of Papistrie in generall and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland: but, in speciall, we detest and refuse the usurped authoritie of that Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civill Magistrate, and consciences of men: all his tyrannous lawes made upon indifferent things against our Christian liberty; his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written Word, the perfection of the Law, the office of Christ, and his blessed evangel. His corrupted doctrine concerning original sin, our naturall inability, and rebellion to God's law, our justification by faith onely, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the Law, the nature, number, and use of the holy sacraments. His five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrines, added to the ministration
of

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the true sacraments without the Word of
 l. His cruell judgment against infants de-
 ciding without the sacrament. His absolute
 effitie of baptisme. His blasphemous opi-
 nion of transubstantiation, or reall presence of
 Christ's bodie in the elements, and receiving
 the same by the wicked, or bodies of men.
 dispensations with solemn oathes, perjuries,
 degrees of marriage forbidden in the Word.
 crueltie against the innocent divorced.
 divellishmasse. His blasphemous priesthood.
 profane sacrifice for the sinnes of the dead
 the quicke. His canonization of men, call-
 upon angels or saints departed, worshipping
 magerie, reliques, and crosses, dedicating
 firs, altars, dayes, vows to creatures. His
 gatory, praiers for the dead, praying or
 king in a strange language, with his pro-
 cessions and blasphemous letanie, and multitude
 advocates or mediators, his manifold or-
 , auricular confession. His desperate and
 certaine repentance. His generall and doubt-
 le faith. His satisfactions of men for their
 . His justification by works, *OPUS OPERA-*
M, works of supererogation, merits, pardons,
 egrinations, and stations. His holy water,
 tising of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing
 ing, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of
 l's good creatures, with the superstitious o-
 onjoyued therewith. His worldly monarchy,
 wicked hierarchy. His three solemn vows,
 h all his shavellings of sundry sorts. His

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M m m m

erroneous

erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers and approvers of that cruell and bloody band, conjured against the Kirke of God. And finally, we detest all his vaine allegories, rites, signes, and traditions brought in the Kirk, without, or against the Word of God, and doctrine of this true Reformed Kirk. To the which wee joyn ourselves willingly, in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments, as lively members of the same, in Christ our head: Promising and swearing, by the great name of the Lord our God, That we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, and shall defend the same, according to our vocation and power, all the dayes of our lives, under the paines contained in the law, and danger both of body and soule in the day of God's fearful judgment. And, seeing that many are stirred up by Satan and that Roman Antichrist, to promise, sweare, subscribe, and for a time use the holy sacraments in the Kirk deceitfully, against their owne consciences, minding hereby, first, under the externall cloak of religion, to corrupt and subvert secretly God's true religion, within the Kirk and afterward, when time may serve, to become open enemies and persecuters of the same, under vaine hope of the Popes dispensation divided against the Word of God, to his greater confusion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Jesus:

We

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WE therefore, willing to take away all suspicion of hypocrisie, and of such double dealing with God and his Kirk, protest, and call the searcher of all hearts to witnesse, that our minds and hearts do fully agree with this our confession, promise, oath, and subscription: so that we are not moved for any worldly respect, but are perswaded only in our consciences, through the knowledge and love of God's true religion, printed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, as we shall answer to him in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. And because wee perceive, that the quietnesse and stability of our religion and Kirk doth depend upon the safety and good behaviour of the King's Majesty, as upon a comfortable instrument of God's mercie granted to this countrey, for the maintenance of his Kirk, and ministration of justice amongst us, we protest and promise with our hearts, under the same oath, hand-writ and paines, That we shall defend his person and authority, with our gear, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ his evangel, liberties of our countrey, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realme, or without, as we desire our God to be a strong and mercifull defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory eternally. Amen."

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THE year following, the General Assembly adopted the measure. It became universal in the Church. From this time the idea of Covenant-renewal has prevailed among covenanters. As the Church had assumed a regular form, so her faithful friends pursued a system with distinguished vigour. The first time this covenant was renewed was in 1593, as a testimony of gratitude for deliverance from the Spanish Armada. The manner of it deserves our attention; it was done with a bond suited to the state of the Church and nation. It was a second time renewed 1596, for the purpose of confirming and strengthening their attainments in Reformation. Court influence produced a scene of apostacy, and corruption in the doctrine and Government, until the year 1638. This was also done by a bond accommodated unto their circumstances; after enumerating various acts of Parliament, which secured the covenanters from the crime of rebellion. The tenor of their bond follows:

“ WE Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgeses, Ministers, and Commons under-subscribing, considering divers times before, and especially at this time, the danger of the true Reformed Religion, of the King’s honour, and of the public peace of the kingdom, by the manifold innovations and evils generally contained, and particularly mentioned in our late supplications, complaints, and protestations; Do hereby

hercby profess, and before God, his angels, and the world, solemnly declare, That with our whole heart we agree, and resolve all the days of our life, constantly to adhere unto and to defend the foresaid true religion: And forbearing the practice of all novations already introduced in the matters of the worship of God, or approbation of the public government of the Kirk, or civil places and power of kirkmen, till they be tried and allowed in free Assemblies and Parliaments; to labour, by all lawful means, to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel, as it was established and professed before the foresaid novations: And because, after due examination, we plainly perceive, and undoubtedly believe, that the innovations and evils contained in our supplications, complaints, and protestations, have no warrant of the Word of God, are contrary to the articles of the foresaid Confession, to the intention and meaning of the blessed Reformers of Religion in this land, to the above-written acts of Parliament; and do sensibly tend to the re-establishing of the Popish Religion and Tyranny, and the subversion and ruin of the true Reformed Religion, and of our liberties, laws, and estates: We also declare, That the foresaid Confessions are to be interpreted, and ought to be understood of the foresaid novations and evils, no less than if every one of them had been expressed in the foresaid Confessions; and that we are obliged to detest and
 abhor

abhor them, amongst other particular heads of Papistry abjured therein. And, therefore, from the knowledge and conscience of our duty to God, to our King and country, without any worldly respect or inducement, so far as human infirmity will suffer, wishing a further measure of the Grace of God for this effect; We promise and swear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, to continue in the profession and obedience of the foresaid religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life.

AND, in like manner, with the same heart, we declare, before God and men, That we have no intention nor desire to attempt any thing that may turn to the dishonour of God, or to the diminution of the King's greatness and authority: But, on the contrary, we promise and swear, That we shall, to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, stand to the defence of our dread Sovereign the King's Majesty, his person and authority, in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom: As also, to the mutual defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the same cause of maintaining the true religion and his Majesty's authority, with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all
 sorts

forts of persons whatsoever; so that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause, shall be taken as done to us all in general, and to every one of us in particular. And that we shall neither directly nor indirectly suffer ourselves to be divided or withdrawn, by whatsoever suggestion, combination, allurements, or terror, from this blessed and loyal conjunction; nor shall cast any let or impediment that may stay or hinder any such resolution, as, by common consent, shall be found to conduce for so good ends: But, on the contrary, shall, by all lawful means, labour to further and promote the same; and if any such dangerous and divisive motion be made to us, by word or writ, We, and every one of us, shall either suppress it, or, if need be, shall incontinent make the same known, that it may be timeously obviated. Neither do we fear the foul aspersions of rebellion, combination, or what else our adversaries, from their craft and malice, would put upon us; seeing what we do is so well warranted, and ariseth from an unfeigned desire to maintain the true worship of God, the Majesty of our King, and the peace of the kingdom, for the common happiness of ourselves and our posterity.

AND because we cannot look for a blessing from God upon our proceedings, except with our profession and subscription we join such a life and conversation as beseemeth Christians who have renewed their covenant with God:

We

We therefore, faithfully promise, for ourselves, our followers, and all others under us, both in public and in our particular families, and personal carriage, to endeavour to keep ourselves within the bounds of Christian liberty ; and to be good examples to others of all godliness, soberness, and righteousness, and of every duty we owe to God and man.

AND, that this our union and conjunction may be observed without violation, We call the **LIVING GOD, THE SEARCHER OF OUR HEARTS**, to witness, who knoweth this to be our sincere desire and unfeigned resolution, as we shall answer to **JESUS CHRIST** in the great day, and under the pain of God's everlasting wrath, and of infamy and loss of all honour and respect in this world: Most humbly beseeching the **LORD** to strengthen us by his **HOLY SPIRIT** for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with a happy success, that religion and righteousness may flourish in the land, to the glory of **GOD** the honour of our **King**, the peace and comfort of us all. In witness we have subscribed with our hands all the premises."

BOTH nations having entertained ideas of civil power directly opposite to **King Charles I.** and as he considered Episcopal government as a more proper instrument of prerogative than any other form. The Parliament, with which he differed, having called together an **Assembly**

bly of Divines, for the advancement of religion, they made considerable progress in the business; while the Parliament promoted the cause of civil liberty. Charles had recourse to arms. His opponents meant to defend themselves: And, having called in the assistance of their brethren in Scotland, they would comply only on condition of the South Britons joining with them in an ecclesiastic union, for promoting uniformity in religion, in conformity to the best Reformed Churches. Though the measure was disagreeable to many politicians; yet, for political reasons, rather than religious motives, they complied with it: And the following Covenant, entitled THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, was entered into:

“ WE Noblemen, Barons, Knights, Gentlemen, Citizens, Burgeesses, Ministers of the Gospel, and Commons of all sorts, in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland, by the providence of God living under one King, and being of one Reformed Religion, having before our eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the honour and happiness of the King’s Majesty and his posterity, and the true public liberty, safety and peace of the kingdom, wherein every one’s private condition is included: And calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts, and practices of the enemies of God against the true religion,

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and professors thereof, in all places, especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the Reformation of Religion; and how much their rage, power, and presumption are of late, and this time, increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable state of the Church and Kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the Church and Kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the Church and Kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies: We have now, at last, (after other means of supplication, remonstrance, protestations, and sufferings), for the preservation of ourselves and our religion from utter ruin and destruction, according to the commendable practice of these kingdoms in former times, and the example of God's people in other nations, after mature deliberation, resolved and determined to enter into a mutual and Solemn League and Covenant, wherein we all subscribe, and each of us for himself, with our hands lifted up to the **MOST HIGH GOD**, do swear,

I. THAT we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavour, in our several places and callings, the preservation of the Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, against our common enemies; the Reformation of Religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best
Reformed

Reformed Churches: And shall endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church-government, directory for worship and catechising; that we, and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love; and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

II. THAT we shall, in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, (that is, church-government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy), superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness; lest we partake in other mens sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms.

III. WE shall, with the same sincerity, reality, and constancy, in our several vocations, endeavour, with our estates and lives, mutually to preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms; and to preserve and defend the King's Majesty's person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; that the world may bear

witness with our consciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish his Majesty's just power and greatness.

IV. WE shall also, with all faithfulness, endeavour the discovery of all such as have been, or shall be incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, by hindering the Reformation of religion, dividing the King from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction, or parties, amongst the people, contrary to this league and covenant; that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve; or the supreme judicatures of both kingdoms respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

V. AND whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between these kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors, is, by the good Providence of God, granted unto us, and hath been lately concluded and settled by both Parliaments; we shall, each of us, according to our place and interest, endeavour that they may remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all posterity; and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the precedent article.

VI. WE shall also, according to our places and callings, in this common cause of religion, liberty, and peace of the kingdoms, assist and defend

defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof; and shall not suffer ourselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, persuasion, or terror, to be divided or withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifference and neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honour of the King; but shall, all the days of our lives, zealously and constantly continue therein, against all opposition, and promote the same, according to our power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever; and what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed. All which we shall do as in the sight of God.

AND because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins and provocations against God, and his Son Jesus Christ, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof: we profess and declare, before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms; especially, that we have not, as we ought, valued the inestimable benefit of the Gospel, that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof, and that we have not endeavoured to receive Christ in our hearts,
nor

nor to walk worthy of him in our lives ; which are the causes of other sins and transgressions, so much abounding amongst us ; and our true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour, for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real Reformation ; that the Lord may turn away his wrath and heavy indignation, and establish these Churches and Kingdoms in truth and peace. And this covenant we make in the presence of ALMIGHTY GOD, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed : Most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his Holy Spirit for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with such success, as may be deliverance and safety to his people, and encouragement to other Christian Churches, groaning under, or in danger of the yoke of Antichristian tyranny, to join in the same, or like association and covenant ; to the glory of God, the enlargement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the peace and tranquility of Christian kingdoms and commonwealths."

I SHALL now make some REFLECTIONS on the British Fœderal Transactions.

I. THESE

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1. THESE Covenants were perfectly agreeable to the laws of the country, and the renovation of them no violation of the constitution. There are a class of men, who seem to be sprung from the ancient Samaritans, they suggested, that the covenanters in Nehemiah's day were a parcel of rebels. A branch of the same tree, having the same root of bitterness, seems to have existed in the days of the Primitive Church. Nero and Trajan, however opposite in character, agreed in finding the covenanting Christians enemies to the State. It was upon the same footing that the Waldenses were persecuted by the Court of Turin. The patrons of the doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience seem to have borrowed these Antichristian weapons, to fight a Covenanted Reformation in this land. This needs not greatly surprise us, as these men did not choose to understand the civil or religious rights of mankind. But we behold, with astonishment, a Reverend Doctor of this enlightened age, standing at the head of the roll in the list of candidates for literary fame, announcing the National oath to have been employed, in 1638, "to promote VIOLENT and UNCONSTITUTIONAL MEASURES." There is no other method to account for it, but that polite negligence for which the works of that author are so remarkably distinguished. Had the Reverend Doctor found leisure to consult the law-authorities quoted in the introduction to the
bond

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bond used in 1638, as they are to be found subjoined to that nearly antiquated system, THE CONFESSION OF FAITH; and the divine authority, to be found in a still more antiquated code of laws, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, I have little room to doubt, such is the CANDOUR, MODERATION, and LIBERALITY OF SENTIMENT which falls to the portion of the Reverend PRINCIPAL, but that he should have found the measures pursued as constitutional and salutary as the Transactions themselves were warrantable and laudable: And the covenanters, instead of rebels, the best patriots which that, or any other age ever produced.

2. THE political views, and hypocritical purposes, which induced some enemies to Reformation principles to enter into the National Covenant and Solemn League, are no objections against these Transactions themselves; nor against the conduct of such as entered into them with sincerity of heart. In the days of danger, the Church is diminished by apostacy; and in the days of prosperity, she is no less endangered by a too rapid increase in hypocrisy. The latter was the case in the last age. But, if the argument be good in this case, it must also be valid against Christianity itself; as it is well known, that nations and princes have sometimes been induced to embrace Christianity from political views. One cannot

cannot easily explain, however, the motives of many who make the above objection. Who were the persons who took the covenants from political motives? Were they not such as had a secret enmity at the Presbyterian system, and a monarchy limited by law? Were they not the friends of Episcopacy and absolute government? The rest, generally speaking, were in good earnest, in avowing their Creed: But, to qualify for places, the royalists, as they are styled, swallowed all the national oaths; and yet their successors cry out of hypocrisy! Would not one imagine, that a decent regard to their predecessors would enjoin them silence in this matter?

3. THESE Transactions were lawful, as to the matter; and necessary, as to the time. They were such as comprehended every attainment in Reformation. It has been their fate to meet with much opposition in the world, indeed; as well as their friends with amazing obloquy and reproach. I shall only single out one instance of both, from the many which might be produced. They are represented not only as encroaching on the rights of private judgment, but also as binding to sanguinary measures and persecution for conscience sake. It has been said, that the Solemn League binds to EXTIRPATE Prelacy, &c. But, let it be observed, that the phrase does not appear to be stronger than that of our Saviour, to ROOT

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out every plant which the Father's right hand hath not planted. Prelacy, in the view of every Presbyterian, who believes the divine right of the Presbyterian form of government, is a plant of this kind. Nothing sanguinary was intended by Christ; and the conduct of Presbyterians, when in power, suffers nothing by a comparative view with that of Prelates, as to complying with the will of Christ in this matter. The former provided **SUSTENANCE** for the life of the ejected; the latter a **PRISON**. No measure which was used by the Presbyterians ever equalled the Bartholomew Bushel, or the Corporation Act; not to mention the Star Chamber, under Laud. The doctrine of the right of conscience was as well understood by the Presbyterians in Britain, as in any of the Protestant Churches: But the truth is, it was reserved to **LOCKE** to set them in a still clearer point of view. In one word, if any thing sanguinary was meant, we expressed our dissent as early as 1737*.

4. **THESE** Covenants had the seal of Heaven's approbation set unto them, not only by bringing many to enter into them; but also, by the effusion of his Spirit on the Covenanters, at the season of their entrance, and enabling them, at last, to seal them with their blood.

* **Vide TESTIMONY.**

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DISSERTATION XX.

ON THE

RENOVATION

OF OUR

SOLEMN COVENANTS

IN THE

PRESENT AGE.

THE foregoing Covenants were renewed in 1648: And the Confession of Sins, and Engagement to Duties are to be found usually bound up with our Confession of Faith. From the violation of these engagements, by what is called the PUBLIC RESOLUTIONS, until the Revolution, there followed a scene of covenant-violation altogether unexampled in the annals of mankind. If the violation was less flagrant at, and after the Revolution; yet, the proper season of covenant-renovation was utterly neglected. There were a handful of

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sufferers

sufferers who had kept themselves, in a great measure, from the pollutions of the world, who survived the Persecution. These were shamefully deserted by their ministers; and left in great confusion, as to both their political and religious principles. The judicatories of the Revolution Church were a very heterogeneous composition: They were composed of members who had sailed with the wind for thirty years bygone, for one portion; another was made up of the indulged; and a third of such as had been refugees in other countries. The iron and clay were tempered together by the force of civil authority. Various overtures and proposals were made, for putting hand to a Covenanted Reformation; but the diversity of opinion and practice among the clergy prevented the wishes of the few from any renovation of our Solemn Covenants at that memorable deliverance. Never had a church a fairer opportunity, or a louder call to it, than at that time: They had been delivered from slavery and absolute government in the State, and a long period (twenty-eight years) of hot persecution for conscience sake. Never did a church and nation so shamefully neglect the golden season which God put into their hand. Those who polluted their consciences by swearing the covenants, and the oaths of canonical obedience, as well as all oaths by which the Covenants were abjured, could not well be expected to be honoured by God as instruments in such a noble

noble work. These, or such as had been ordained by them, formed the greater part, by much, of the ministers of the Church of Scotland. The indulged seem to have been a rump of the ancient resolutioners; of consequence, political maxims, which too frequently governed their conduct, prevailed with them, at this time, to supersede that work. The few who returned from their lurking places were out-voted, and borne down by the persuasion and address of others. The Synod of Gallogway was the only one, if I mistake not, which took any steps for the renovation of their sacred engagements; but as much Court-water was procured as extinguished their desires. The perpetual obligation of our Covenants, however, was maintained by the greater part of Presbyterians; and ministers, when laying the baptismal vows on parents, mentioned both the National Covenant and Solemn League, in express terms. Individual ministers likewise made some appearance in behalf of our national vows: Mr Hog appeared their steady friend on the north side of the Forth; Mr Boston's sermons, which he delivered in this country, shew his sentiments on that subject; and to him were joined Messrs Wilson and Davidson, as well as various other ministers of inferior reputation; prior unto these, Mr Gabriel Semple, who came out of the furnace of persecution, had patronized the same cause: But the most vigorous and explicit testimony,

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in favour of our 'Solemn Covenants, at that time, was reserved for Mr John Hepburn, minister at Orr. It is not pretended that every step of management taken by him, and such as joined with him, was unexceptionable; but it is certain, that his labours, by the blessing of God, sowed the seeds of sound principles among many, so far as they extended; and multitudes, as far as we can judge, of gracious persons, yea lively Christians, formed the societies which he superintended. As many ministers and people were dissatisfied with many things in the constitution of the Revolution Church; so the judicatories added new grounds of offence in the steps of administration. These are enumerated in the Judicial Act and Testimony, and the Acknowledgment of Sins prefixed to the bond which is now in use among covenanters.

PRIOR to the year 1732, various testimonies had been given, by protest and otherways, against these steps of mal-administration: But, after that period, the highest ecclesiastical authority was interposed to put a period unto them. Upon this, Mr Ebenezer Erskine, in a sermon delivered before the Synod of Perth, turned the edge of his doctrine against the growing evil. This was highly resented by the courts. He maintained what he was persuaded to be the cause of Truth, with undaunted courage. Three other ministers took part

part with him in framing various papers respecting the grievances of the Church and her members, one of which bore the designation of a TESTIMONY. In the year 1737, the ministers who befriended a Covenanted Reformation, and maintained a testimony for it in connection with Mr Erskine, having previously constituted themselves into a Presbytery, entered more minutely into a consideration of the national apostacy from a Covenanted Reformation: They recount the most capital steps of it, and condemn them: They avow their attachment unto every former attainment; and their resolution to prosecute the ends of their testimony in connection with every one who should choose to join them. This testimony was received with avidity by many. It was peculiarly tormenting to the leaders of the National Church: They drew the ecclesiastic sword against its authors: They did not spare their treasures in hiring a servile writer to confute it. These things contributed their part to increase its number and respect. The blessing of God succeeded the labours of his servants; and their number was increased both by ordinations and new accessions from the Establishment. The ministers and people were unanimous in the advancement of a Covenanted Reformation. As errors were still upon the increase in the land, they proceeded to publish an Act, entitled THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE, for their more explicit condemnation: And, considering

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considering the calls of both Word and Providence, they proceeded to frame an Acknowledgment of Sins, consisting of an enumeration of those things which were a violation of former covenant engagements; and, at the same time, made out a bond, the tenor of which follows:

“WE, ALL AND EVERY ONE OF US, though sensible of the deceitfulness and unbelief of our own hearts, and however frequently perplexed with doubts and fears anent our actual believing, yet desiring to essay, in the LORD'S STRENGTH, and in obedience to his command, to glorify God, by believing his word of grace, contained in his covenant of promise, to devote ourselves unto the Lord in a covenant of duty; WE DO, with our hands lifted up to the MOST HIGH GOD, hereby profess, and, before God, angels, and men, solemnly declare, That, through the grace of God, and according to the measure of his grace given unto us, we do, with our whole hearts, take hold of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the only propitiation for our sins; his RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the only foundation of our access to, and acceptance with God; his COVENANT of free and rich promises, as our only charter for the heavenly inheritance; his WORD, for our perfect and only rule of faith and practice; his SPIRIT, for our alone guide, to lead us into all truth revealed in his holy Word, unto which nothing, at any time, or in

be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. We avouch the **LORD** to be our **GOD**; and, in the strength of his promised grace, we **PROMISE** and **SWEAR**, by the **GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD**, That we shall walk in his way, keep his judgments and commandments, and hearken to his voice: And, particularly, that we shall, by the Lord's grace, continue and abide in the profession, faith, and obedience of the foresaid true Reformed religion, in doctrine, worship, Presbyterial Church-government and discipline; and that we shall, according to our several stations, places, and callings, contend and testify against all contrary evils, errors, and corruptions, particularly, Popery, Prelacy, Deism, Arianism, Arminianism, and every error subversive to the Doctrine of Grace; as also, Independency, Latitudinarian tenets, and the other evils named in the above confession of sins.

IN like manner, **WE PROMISE AND SWEAR**, That, by all means, which are lawful and warrantable for us, according to the Word of God, the approved and received standards of this Church, and our known principles, we shall, in our several stations and callings, endeavour the Reformation of religion in England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God; and to promote and advance our covenanted conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession

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sion of faith and catechisms, form of Church-government, and directory for worship, as these were received by this Church.

AND, in regard we are taught by the Word of God, and bound by our covenants, National and Solemn League, to live together in the fear of God, and in love one to another, and to encourage one another in the work and cause of the Lord; and that, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: Therefore, in a dependence on the Lord's grace and strength, we, in the same manner, do PROMISE AND SWEAR, That we shall, in our several places and callings, encourage and strengthen one another's hands, in pursuing our end and design of this our solemn oath and covenant; and that we shall endeavour a life and conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ: And that, in our personal callings and particular families, we shall study to be good examples to one another of godliness and righteousness, and of every duty that we owe to God and man; and that we shall not give up ourselves to a detestable indifference and neutrality in the cause of God; but, denying ourselves, and our own things, we shall, above all things, seek the honour of God, and the good of his cause and people; and that, through grace, forsaking the counsels of flesh and blood, and not leaning upon carnal confidences, we shall endeavour to depend up-

on the Lord, to walk by the rule of his Word, and to hearken to his voice by his servants. In all which, professing our own weakness, we earnestly pray to God, who is the Father of mercies, through his Son Jesus Christ, to be merciful unto us, and to enable us, by the power of his Holy Spirit, that we may do our duty, unto the praise of his grace in the Churches. Amen."

BESIDES the Confession of Sins, which is usually read before the swearing of this bond, there was also framed a particular one, suited to the case of the ministry; and the ministers themselves set an example unto their congregations. The form of the attestation of their subscription is as follows: "We under subscribing ministers, members of the Associate Presbytery, do subscribe the above BOND with our hands, at Stirling, the 28th day of December 1743 years;—the said bond having been this day solemnly sworn by us.

EBENEZER ERSKINE, Stirling.

RALPH ERSKINE, Dunfermline.

JAMES THOMSON, Burntisland.

ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF, Abernethy.

THOMAS MAIR, Orwel.

JAMES FISHER, Glasgow.

DAVID SMYTON, Kilmaurs.

WILLIAM HUTTON, Stow.

ADAM GIB, Edinburgh.

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AND.

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AND. CLARKSON, Craigmailen.

JOHN CLELAND, Balfron.

GEORGE BROWN, Perth.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL, Ceres.

THOMAS BALLANTYNE, Sanquhar.

DAVID HORN, Cambusnethan."

FOUR ministers who were not then present, and another who was not then ordained,—did join, after the same manner, in that solemn work, at Falkirk, on the 14th day of March ensuing: And subscribed as follows, viz.

"JAMES MAIR, Linton.

PATRICK MATTHEW, Midholm.

JAMES SCOT, Gateshall.

JOHN WHYT, Dunse.

HENRY ERSKINE, Falkirk *."

NEAR an hundred congregations have copied the example since that time; and some of them have done it frequently, having had occasion for so doing on account of the numbers who voluntarily offered from time to time.

THE serious part of this nation (some friends to the abdicated family excepted) had always a becoming reverence for the Covenants, tho' they had not renewed them for near a century. The first opposition made unto them

* The last of these five subscribers was ordained the day before. All who have been ordained since that time, had previously joined in Covenanting-work,

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from any other quarter was, from Independent notions, maintained under the auspices of JOHN GLAS: But as his system was remarkably obscure, and some of his followers travelled still farther into the land of darkness, it has not proved a hurtful instrument. Opposition from another quarter has been more successful: The fame of WHITEFIELD induced several to invite him into this country; but, as he formed a system of religion suited to the universal taste of mankind; and, as he knew the avenues of human nature remarkably well, he discarded the plan of a Covenanted Reformation, as by much too narrow. This needs to be no matter of surprize: The Covenanters have uniformly represented Episcopal government and worship as corruptions which required reformation; and called such as have been corrupted by them unto repentance, humiliation, and amendment. Though the Apostle Paul saw the propriety of being IN FASTS OFTEN, yet Mr WHITEFIELD seems to have reckoned them wholly unnecessary. Mourning for sin he confined to CONVICTS before conversion: Humiliation he found diametrically opposite to that flow of affection which was the life of his cause. His principles were embraced with avidity by many who had formerly signalized themselves on the side of Covenanting: For his sake, a WILLISON and a ROBB were ready to run down what they had formerly established. From this period, various

The proposed derivation is also irregular, as it confounds Berith (covenant) with Borith (soap). Things sufficiently different indeed : But, perhaps, these men will reply, That all the distinction between these two words originates in the vowel-points. It might be answered, Be it so ; their divine original has been sufficiently demonstrated by P. Whitefield, in our own language, as well as Dr Owen and Dr Gill : not to mention what has been attempted in other languages.

2. THE proposed translation is unjust and improper. It must be an unjust translation which contradicts the inspired writers of the New Testament. The word Berith, when quoted from the Old Testament to the New, is translated Diatheke ; but no one ever imagined that Diatheke signified purifier, or purification. A few examples may be adduced to our purpose, Exod. xxiv 8. " Behold the blood of the COVENANT which the Lord hath made with you," compared with Heb. ix. 20. " This is the blood of the TESTAMENT which the Lord hath enjoined unto you." In the first text, the original word for Covenant is Berith ; In the last, the original word for Testament is Diatheke. The Apostle is there treating of a testamentary Covenant ; therefore, Diatheke is peculiarly expressive of the nature of it. See also, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33. quoted by the Apostle Heb. viii. 8, 9, 10. and x. 16. I believe there is no comparison between the Apostle and the Hutchinsonians as translators : Nor will any true Christian hesitate a moment which to prefer. But, although the Apostle had never translated it, there is abundance of light, in many places, in the context, to shew the absurdity of this newly proposed translation ; as 2 Chron. xvi. 23. " Then Aza sent to Benhadad, king of Syria, who dwelt at Damascus, saying, There is a LEAGUE (Heb. Berith) between me and thee, as there was between thy father and my father. Behold, I have sent thee silver and gold, go break thy LEAGUE (Heb. Berithecha) with Bascha, king of Israel." This text is also sufficient to set aside the force of a distinction which Mr Riccaltoun makes to the following purpose : " That Carath Berith are used to express the transaction we call making a covenant may be granted ; but that Berith, standing by itself, signifies a cove-
nant,

nant, will not be easily proved." Here it stands by itself, yet it signifies a League, or Covenant: But he further insists, "That, when it stands by itself, and signifies God's Berith, then it signifies PURIFIER, and not COVENANT." We may now give some instances of GOD'S BERITH, which cannot be translated GOD'S PURIFIER: Psal. lxxviii. 10. "They kept not the COVENANT (Heb. Berith) of Elohim: and refused to walk in his law." If Berith be translated PURIFIER, in this verse, What is the meaning of it? Or how has it any meaning left in it at all? See also, Deut. xvii. 2. Josh. vii. 11. and xv. 2. 2 Kings xviii. 12, &c. It is still objected, That it is absurd to say CUT OFF A COVENANT; whereas it is a proper expression to say CUT OFF A PURIFIER. It may be answered, That the sacrifice by which the Covenant was confirmed was cut off, and also cut into two parts, Gen. xv. 10. and the sacrifice which seals the Covenant may bear the name of it as well as circumcision. Now, Where is the impropriety, or absurdity, of saying cut off a sacrifice? Moreover, this objection strikes as much against Mr Riccalton as against the doctrine we maintain: For he grants that CARATH BERITH signify to make a covenant; and this is the only phrase which can be translated, from the Hebrew, TO CUT A COVENANT. —From the above considerations it appears, That the word COVENANT has a just claim to its place in our translation.

No II.

[See page 580.]

THE School of Alexandria is a clear proof of the early conversion of Egypt unto the Christian Faith. If we search the records of the Church, we will find, that Isaiah's prediction received an accomplishment in the literal Egypt. A learned Roman Catholic (Huetius) attempts to apply the oracle, Is. xix. 18—25. to the temple which ONIAS built in opposition to that of Jerusalem: But, as VITRINGA justly observes, this history cannot agree with that oracle: The oracle speaks of Egyptians,

gyptians, as distinguished from Israelites; the History of Jews as distinguished from Egyptians (Josephus). The setting up of any altar besides that at Jerusalem, was considered by God as setting up an altar against his altar, and it exposed persons to his curse; but this oracle assures us, that the persons vowing and building the altar are certainly blessed: "The Lord of hosts shall bless them, saying, BLESSED be Egypt my people," &c. If there were proselytes to the Jewish religion, from among THE DWELLERS IN EGYPT, at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, who were converted to the Christian Faith, as a kind of first fruits: How much more copious should be the harvest, which produced a regular dispensation of Gospel ordinances. A JULIAN himself attests the fulfilment of this prediction, Epist. li. "By the gods, I am not a little ashamed, that any of Alexandria should dare to confess himself a Galilean. There was a time when the ancestors of the Hebrews served the Egyptians: But ye, Alexandrians, Egypt being subdued, patiently endure slavery to the despisers of the dogmas of your ancestors, which is against all right." Upon the whole, VITRINGA concludes that this testimony is an evidence not only of the accomplishment of this prophecy, but also of that in P'sal. lxxxvii. 4. "I will make mention of Rahab (or Egypt) and Babylon to them that know me."—"En, ceteris missis, verba notabilia Juliani, in Epistola ad Alexandrinos, quibus hanc mutationem exprobrat: Equidem pudore, per Deos, haud mediocri teneor, Alexandrini, quod illus apud vos GALILÆUM (Christianum) se fateri audeat. Hebræorum quondam verorum Parentes Ægyptiis serviebant: at vos, Alexandrini, modo Ægypto subacta, (hanc enim conditor vester sibi subjecit:) τοῖς πατολιγωρηκαῖσι τῶν πατρῶν δογματῶν δηλίαν ἰβιλύσιον, ἀντικρυς τῶν παλαιῶν θεσμῶν ὑφίστασθαι. patriorum dogmatum contemptoribus servire sponte contra antiqua jura sustinetis. Sic fides facta Oraculo (P'sal. lxxxvii. 4.) ejusdem sensus cuius hæc est prophetia: Commemorabo RAHABUM (Ægyptum) et BABELUM inter eos qui me cognoscunt." VITRINGA, Comment. in Isaïam, p. 782. Now, it is well known that the Primitive Christians literally swore unto the Lord of Hosts, as appears from the monuments of antiquity formerly adduced.

No III.

[See page 658.]

COVENANTING was less general in Ireland than in Britain, as a great number of Protestants fell by the dreadful massacre in that kingdom; and, probably, because the followers of Archbp Usher adhered to what was called the ROYAL CAUSE. There were a great number of Scots, however, who had settled in the northern parts of Ireland; these clave to their brethren, and supported, with distinguished courage, every part of Reformation principles. The labours of a Blair and a Livingstone were eminently successful in that kingdom; and the fruit they afterwards produced appeared in the ready acceptance, and renovation of the Solemn League. And many Irish Protestants followed their example: As appears from the declaration of the Presbytery of Bangor in the year 1649, That they and others had renewed this covenant. In the several congregations of Irish Protestants, a representation was read against the proceedings of the Sectarian Party that beheaded King Charles I. and these Protestants avow the Solemn League as their own covenant. Not only so, but as late as 1662, fifty-nine ministers of the Synod of Bellimenoeh, who were most zealous covenanters, refused to conform to Episcopacy, considering it as abjured by the Solemn League; which gives us the strongest proof that covenanters were not so inconsiderable in the kingdom of Ireland as some have imagined.

TO THE READER.

THOUGH the Author revised the proof-sheets, when at home, with every degree of diligence possible, yet several ERRATA have crept into the work. It is hop'd the candid reader will forgive smaller mistakes, and correct the following thus:—P. 336. Note, third line from the foot, for HEARTS read HEART.—P. 521. six lines from the foot, the following part of the quotation has been omitted: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee.”—P. 548. Note, second line from the foot, after the marks of quotation add, See Dr WHITBY on Matth. v. 21.—P. 636. line ninth from the top, for COMES read CAME. —The spelling in ancient deeds, such as the League of Smalkald, is preserved as in the monuments in which they are to be found,

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SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

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 er of the Gospel, Glasgow
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 er, Kelfo
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 Stichel
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 burgh
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 fo
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 Isabel Davidson

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 And. Ewen, weaver, there

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Yetholm, 4
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Mungo Kyle

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 ton, 39
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Robert Hoggart, labourer,
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John Hoggart
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Robert Diepie, there
John Johnston, Oxmuir
John Tait, Nenthorn
Mark Rule
Duncan Sinclair
Margaret Smith
Thomas Riddle
James Riddle
James Wood
Jean Wilson
Gideon Bell
Thomas Underwood
John Heatley
William Crozor
Alison Wilson
Isabel Davidson
Margaret Cramond
Janet Heatley
Henry Leck, Ednam
Geo. Kinghorn, inafon, there
Thomas Richardson
Jo. Kinghorn, inafon, Ednam
Andrew Smith
Robert Hunter
William Leck, servant, New-
tonlees

N. B. If any names are omitted, it is through accident; and
some of the places of abode were not given in.

ENTERED IN STATIONERS-HALL, ACCO
TO ACT OF PARLIAMENT.



ENTERED IN STATIONERS-HALL, ACCORDING TO ACT OF PARLIAMENT.







